

PROGRESSIVE
AGE OF REASON



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The PROGRESSIVE AGE OF REASON

BY
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*Accept the truth wherever found
On Christian or on heathen ground
Reject all error however long
It may have been nursed by the popular throng*

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PREFACE

THE only apology I can offer for presenting this book, is that I feel confident that there was a time in my life spanning a period of at least forty years that I would have been glad indeed of the opportunity of reading a book that afforded a clew in regard to the law of our being, relating to the here, and the hereafter, the answer to the great question "After death, what?" Or as Job puts it: "If a man die shall he live again?" A book that sheds the light upon the Bible, both the Old and the New Testament scripture; the origin of the Christian religion and to what extent we are justified in accepting the Protestant or Catholic claim, as does this book however imperfectly it may have been set forth.

An author invariably has in view his or her prospective readers, and in whatever department of literature whether fiction, science, religion, materialism, agnosticism or what you please, he or she labors to make his or her work attractive and inviting to the whole of the class, whichever it may be.

I am no exception to this rule, and will name a few of my prospective readers. All who are interested in this question "Does our consciousness terminate with the death of the body, or do we survive this change?" All of this class are cordially invited.

All who may have some misgivings or some doubts in regard to the Scriptural plan of salvation and may

consider it a little narrow and that its foundation, the Bible may not be the "infallible word of God" throughout, and that the original plan (the Papal) and the revised plans (the Protestant) may smack too much of Priestcraft with a slightly mercenary tendency. All such are cordially invited to read this book.

All who are dissatisfied with ethical or economic conditions, and think they might be improved were not the question of *meum et tuum* so much in evidence, and that the whole object in life with so many is to see to what extent one can corner and monopolize the necessities of life, and force his weaker brothers to pay tribute for all the commodities of commerce. All such are cordially invited to read this book.

All who have suffered bereavement, the loss of friends near and dear, and among the conflicting creeds, beliefs and unbeliefs, Agnostic and Materialistic, you are bewildered as to whither? where? when? or if ever in the infinite forever of unbounded space shall we meet and know each other again? All such are cordially invited to read this book.

Finally, dear reader, since people die at all ages, since "from the wondrous tree of life, the buds and blossoms fall with ripened fruit, and in the common bed of earth the patriarchs and babes sleep side by side." Therefore let all who can read, read; the young of all ages, the middle aged of all ages, and the old of all ages.

I would make my invitation as general as the matter of which it treats is common to all sentient life, so if any feel that they have not been specially invited, you are hereby invited to read this message.

The man behind the pulpit, and the man in the pew, are invited to read, for if you are sure of your ground, you should make yourselves thoroughly acquainted with the ground of your opposers, so that you can meet them in their opposition, and lay them as they should be laid if they are in error.

Spiritualists may also read this book, but it was not so much intended for them.

There is something indeed pathetic pervading the whole realm of Christendom. Right in the shadow of the church steeple, sits the man with his pen, men of genius, men of high attainment, intellectually, and in this twentieth century indites his book and offers it for sale, abnegating every shadow of a hope that we have a conscious existence after the death of the body!

Here are a few catch-words from an "Ad" that came to my hand just last evening, relating to a book of this description—"A new book: This is a Materialistic book. The author does not believe that the soul survives the body." He says: Is it right to lie for the concealment of a disagreeable truth—to enclose the vital truth in a pleasant husk of fiction by tricking the people with the delusion of agreeable falsehoods? No! Tell the truth! Let not the truth be brought into disrepute by unworthy and debasing associations. A very frank book; serious, scholarly, convincing.)

This Author thinks he holds the key that unlocks the mysteries of nature, and is willing to deliver it over to all upon receipt of the price of his book.

This looks to me like a sad lullaby by which to be crooned into an eternal sleep; however scholarly and

beautifully it may be set to words, could make but little difference!

Why should such a sad, and pensive belief as this have gained currency in this enlightened age? It comes about by our not being just as enlightened as we think we are. It comes about through a misconception of the Scripture, and centuries upon centuries of wrong teaching.

Dear friends when you have finished this book, please ask yourselves this question: Which is the most enjoyable belief? And which is backed by the best proof the Materialist religion, the Christian Orthodox religion, or the Spiritualist's religion?

One of America's great preachers at a time in his life wrote for publication a large volume, profusely embellished with illustrations, certain of them grossly nude.

This book is purely Orthodox from cover to cover, regarding the Bible as God's revelation to man in its entirety with the Orthodox interpretation throughout. I speak of this to show what a contrast and under what different conditions, are these two books written, his and this one.

In his introductory remarks, he says: "Great is the responsibility of publishing a book, especially in this case where the publishers a month before the book is published have sold 250,000 copies thereof." What a contrast! If this great author and preacher had sold this number of books before they are published, and he is satisfied that he is giving the world the sacred truth, why this weight of responsibility? It would seem that this condition would relieve me of my load of respon-

sibility all together: which consists of the grave questions of, how am I to raise the funds necessary to pay for the publication of this book in advance, and then the payment of the debt thereafter.

But I feel as did St. Paul while he was engaged at persecuting the Christians, and presumably after his conversion while he was trying to convert the world to Christianity, I have written this book in all good conscience, and with the best of intentions; it contains my views and convictions upon religion and I have aimed to give nothing that cannot be proved either within the realm of the Scripture or within the realm of Spiritualism.

And yet I expect to be heavily set down upon by my Orthodox friends, and to them I would say: "Remember that the objects of your worship are martyrs to their faith at some earlier age of the world, and in looking over the bloody pages of the past, you will discover that Error has ever occupied the throne and Truth has ever been upon the scaffold."

Dear reader, when one becomes invested of an all important truth there are two courses that may be pursued. First, to remain supremely impassive; incommunicative; to preserve a taciturn indifference; a sullen silence, and sit and watch the world go by until the revolution comes that sweeps you from the shores of time, or, Secondly, to speak forth that the world may know. I elect to speak.

Is religious persecution the offspring of Wisdom, or of Ignorance?

I should say most decidedly the latter, and while I must avoid entering at length into this subject here is

the gist of the stock argument offered by Ignorance to justify the extreme measures that leads to religious persecutions.

The interpretation of the Scripture by the Holy Fathers. A savage vindictive God who metes out rewards and punishments according to the conduct of his creatures, in a sinned world, and after the death of the body, you go direct to your reward or punishment as the case may be, which condition holds throughout the countless aeons of eternity.

Upon this hypothesis the man of God reasons "twere better to slay one heretic, or force him to recant than to have a legion of his posterity resting eternally in hell."

And again while this mode of procedure obtains to better conditions in the supernal he reasons that it also tends to better conditions with mankind here on earth; for with all who refuse to accept the 'Faith' to have such removed, so that in the great and glorious noon-day of Christainity there would then be but one God (Israel's) one Saviour, one Bible, one Church, Creed or Faith.

This was the argument, and this was the policy upon which the church strove and worked most strenuously for many centuries, but it has woefully failed. And there has now it seems a blight to have struck the Orthodox churches and the cause the diagnosis and prognosis of this blight gives rise to this book "The Progressive Age of Reason":

Let not this weak unknowing hand
Presume thy bolts to throw.
To deal damnation round the land
On each I judge thy foe. (Pope.)

The Progress of Reason

PART I

CHAPTER I

JANUARY 11, 1909. I commence the arduous task of compiling a book. Now with the millions of books extant, and upon every subject that can engage the thought of man; books treating of all the varied branches of science; books treating of the exceedingly complex and innumerably ramified subject which by common consent is called Theology; in fine there are books written in support of every imagination of the mind, and in nearly every case there is the man or woman with the "blue pencil" to note exceptions, and prepare his book in contradiction.

With this fact staring me in the face, of the vast amount of books in the world, I feel constrained that there is still one more book needed: and my work henceforward until this book is completed, will be laid along this line, and I shall expect to work under this impression until the end is reached. The title of a book is invariably the first thing observed and read of the book, and the title always suggests an idea in regard to the subject matter and trend of thought contained therein.

Now it is a part of American history that has been kept in the foreground from the birth of our Republic, that Thomas Paine wrote a book entitled the "Age of

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Reason." Here is the prefatory page of this much talked of volume:

"To My Fellow Citizens of the United States of America:

I put the following work under your protection. It contains my opinions upon Religion. You will do me the justice to remember, that I have always strenuously supported the Right of every Man to his own opinion, however different that opinion might be to mine." He who denies to another this right, makes a slave of himself to his present opinion, because he precludes himself the right of changing it.

The most formidable weapon against errors of every kind is Reason. I have never used any other, and I trust I never shall."

"Your affectionate friend and fellow citizen,

Thomas Paine."

"Written in Luxembourg, France, January 27, 1794."

You will see by comparing dates that the above was written one hundred and fifteen years ago. Now is there anything herein contained that anyone could wish to "blue pencil" or take exceptions to?

'Tis said, and has many times been proved "That history repeats itself." Therefore it seems not unbecoming that there should be another effort made to give to the world another "Age of Reason." And as we should all work to the common end that progression is the law, I will interpolate the word "progressive" with the hope that the "Progressive Age of Reason" may have a somewhat broader sweep, and give the

world a better understanding in regard to the law of being, than did my predecessor Thomas Paine. But while I cannot hope to wield a pen with the power, as did this pioneer, yet I feel certain that I have a knowledge that was unknown to the world in the day of Thomas Paine.

And though I lack the natural ability of this great Patriot and Author for the emancipation of man from mental bondage, still I feel it my bounden duty to give this book to the world, feeling that did we not work, because there are those who may excel us, this would bar most people from the field of labor in whatever line they might choose to work.

Now I will endeavor to outline my plan of procedure as concisely as will be consistent to a fair understanding of what I may wish to say.

Proposition 1. Do we survive the change called Death, and is it possible for those who have crossed the "great divide to communicate with those in earth-life? This proposition involves a dual interrogation and I would ask you is there a question that should or could concern us more than does this? This I consider the greatest question that can engage the mind of man!

Proposition 2. Is the Bible a revelation from God? Or in other words: Is the Bible the infallible word of God? This is also a question of grave import a question that has by wars and religious persecutions—the fagot and sword—for centuries deluged the world with blood. But this is not the thing to be here considered, the destruction of life and property, and the suffering that has been inflicted is not the question. The ques-

tion is, Is the Bible what its friends claim, "A revelation from God?"

Now these two propositions I shall expect to make the foundation upon which to erect this my work, "The Progressive Age of Reason."

The first proposition is the altogether important one, and the one upon which the other hinges, but in order to bring it properly before the mind the second proposition must be first considered:

Therefore, Part First of this work will consist of an examination of the Scripture, aiming to lay all prejudice aside and treat it in all fairness as far as my finite mind is capable, and I will say at this time that it is my aim to give you in this book what I think and believe to be the truth, and also to tell you of things I do not believe. It is not my desire nor can it give me any pleasure to disturb or shake any individual's faith of any creed, only as I may be able to placate said individual with something that later he will find far more enjoyable, or at least what I think will be. So I will ask you to not jump at conclusions, nor pass judgment until the end is reached, nor to take offense in little things but remain with me to the close and use your reason and see if you are not benefitted thereby. This I am saying to those that believe that the only light given to the world is through this Book the Bible.

A few words to the Clergy. For as this work advances you may conclude that I am doing something that in the future may be derogatory to the foundation of your faith, and work ultimate damage to your respective churches.

To these I would say, stay, for all of our interests

that stand for anything that has intrinsic value we hold in common. I will now name a few of these common interests, that we may see if there is one I name that you would abrogate. The right to live; the right to think; the right to act if in accordance to the rules prescribed by our civil or moral laws; the right to own and possess property that we have acquired honestly; the right to worship according to the dictates of our conscience providing our conscience does not prompt us to interfere with others rights, or not to worship at all if we prefer; the right to mingle into society, to interchange thought; the right to study or to give it another expression the right to investigate in the realm of science and if perchance a discovery is made that may be useful to mankind, would it not be incumbent upon the discoverer to make it known.

Since what is termed the Reformation, Bibles have been dispersed all over the civilized world and translated in all of the written languages, so we are empriviledged thereby with the right to read and draw our own conclusions in regard to this Book, and whether or not we consider it to be the inspired word of God. Would you deny mankind this right? We have the common right and should maintain a common interest in determining in every possible way what is Truth, and of applying every test available to distinguish it from its counterfeit Error. We certainly hold in common a just abhorrence for ignorance, bigotry and superstition, and all the indamnable deeds wrought in their name since man began to make history.

We are certainly equally interested in the question of a future existence beyond the grave, and what it will

be like, and of the question of rewards and punishments. I might name many other things upon which our views must harmonize. We must agree on things that stand for the amelioration of the human race which at this later day is called Altruism, which means charity, the quality that St. Paul so highly recommended. We hold a like repugnance or I might say abhorrence for this sad visaged melancholy child Materialism, begotten of despair who leads his proselytes to the grave and there bids them a grewsome and eternal farewell.

We alike denounce intemperance and vice of all kinds with its blighting withering influence, we agree on all that stands for the welfare of mankind, all that makes for peace and prosperity, all that goes to make the home a home in every sense of the word, so that it will be held in remembrance and its recollections a pleasure. And here is another thing I might speak of in this connection; the question of sincerity; you certainly hold that you are sincere in your preaching and you all firmly believe in all the things of which you preach. I am ready here and pleased to declare also, that I am sincere in what I write, and the matter contained in this volume are my convictions, both positively and negatively, that is in regard to what I firmly believe and firmly disbelieve.

Now is there anything herein enumerated upon which you at this age would take exceptions? I trust your answer is no.

Well then I must proceed. At this which I regret to say must be the parting of our ways. Because I declare unto you and unto all the world, to both Jew and

Gentile, to the Roman Church and her progeny the Protestant Creeds (one hundred and fifty-seven, I am informed) both clergy and laymen. I do not believe the Bible to be any revelation from the God that created and rules the Universe. The God of the Bible I believe to be nothing more than a man-made God existing only in the imagination, and all of the innumerable creeds and beliefs founded thereon I firmly believe to be a common error. This I expect to prove to the satisfaction of all who wish to know, and who take sufficient interest in a desire for the truth, and will follow me through the course of my deductions. I have many things to tell you. I expect to give you the "good news." "The glad tidings of great joy." When Thomas Paine wrote his "Age of Reason" one hundred and fifteen years ago, he did not know of the glorious things that are known of at this time that I am going to try to tell you.

Have I had a call to give you this Book? Read and I will try to let you know. I will now give you some reasons why I feel constrained to write this portion or Part I. The Book called the Bible is error and to try to believe it gives to the human race a mental obliquity a strabismus to the mental vision that makes everything in nature look distorted and dismal. It has a tendency to make mankind misanthropic, and pessimistic. Despite what is claimed to be a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies and promises as proclaimed by the Priesthood and Clergy, despite the story that a God was crucified to redeem him from the death penalty, pronounced upon him by the Almighty for an act of disobedience by the first pair, to which you are all fa-

miliar. Yet what is gleaned from the whole story, is that there is only a small fraction to be saved, and that those not saved are doomed to eternal torment. I claim such a belief has a tendency to make mankind gloomy, morose and melancholy. Inspires him with hatred, because the burden of the whole story is an account of a God whose attributes seem to be jealousy and hatred.

If the impossible were to take place I do not know of anything on earth that would give me greater sorrow than to be made or impressed to believe that the Bible is a revelation from the "Infinite God" and I were to draw from its contents, or teachings the rules for conduct in this life, and my hope for immortality in the next.

Now I am going to make an assertion that may and without doubt will call down loud denunciations from the pulpit and religious press, but I will bet the Preacher and religious Editor, however loud their denunciations in public that secretly there will be a concordance of vibration in consequence of our souls being tuned in harmony upon this subject. I would not wish to say anything inimical of the Church-man or his work only as I shall hope to change his trend of thought and emancipate him and all the world from the gyves of error that bind him and are harmful.

Here is another thing to which I would invite your attention. It is laid down in our common civil statute "That it is a fraud to conceal a fraud" and should not this be as binding morally in regard to matters of Religion when one feels for a certainty that said religion embraces error that is damaging to the possessor.

I believe in the fullness of time that the Great God of the Universe is to take his place in the minds of his people, and that the Truth is ultimately to triumph. Then I would ask, should I not labor for the consummation of this great and glorious day.

Therefore, the Bible I reiterate is I firmly believe a fraud of which all other frauds pales into utter insignificance. In order to believe the Bible is what it is claimed and purported to be, you have got to stultify Reason you have got to distort your mind in order to make it conform to the unnatural unreasonable teachings of this code of morals so that you become bewildered and know not toward which point to travel. It is apparent that there is a mistake somewhere; because from this Book there have from the different interpretations thereof sprung up one hundred and fifty creeds or more (as I am informed) which means that many different ways of reaching Heaven, through the blood of Christ. Then there are the Jews who claim the Old Testament as theirs exclusively, and they are to have a Saviour or a King that is yet to come. The world has had already sixteen different Saviours and it seems that should be enough.

Rev. Randolph S. Foster, D. D., L.L.D., President of the Drew Theological Seminary—at that time—commences one of his great Orthodox Lectures in this wise. “The Bible is either the most adventurous and astounding fraud that has ever gained currency among men, or the most sublime and momentous system of verities that has at any time appeared upon earth. If the former, it ought not to be impossible to expose the imposture; if the latter, it ought to be possible to com-

mand for it the respect of unprejudiced reason and the acceptance of rational faith."

From this dual proposition the Bishop proceeds with one of his very learned lectures, to prove the Bible "the word of God" and that it is so much above the common man's mentality that we are not able to grasp its meaning, but for our eternal welfare we must believe.

Now we will stick a pin here, and when I have given a few more reasons why I feel impelled to write this book I will speak of something I have further to say in regard to this excerpt from this Bishop's lecture.

That the Bible is no revelation from God, anybody with sense enough to know right from wrong can see; unless his mind in regard to the power of discrimination has been dwarfed and distorted when in childhood by impressing him that the Bible is the word of God, and to use reason in regard to anything that may be found between the covers or to abnegate or doubt any part thereof, is sacrilege, and that there is great danger by raising a question to any part whatever, either in the Old Testament or the New, that you may be led thereby by the great Adversary, the Devil, who is always watching for an opportunity and is ever exerting his subtle influence, and by expressing a doubt of any part of God's holy word that he will seize upon this opportunity and by thus being led in this way by this great Adversary you lose your soul. But to the one who has not had his mind thus warped and stultified, if he is willing to turn on the searchlight of truth and reason, and take the time to examine, can see that

the Bible falls on to the former limb of the Bishop's proposition.

Another, which seems to me a cogent reason, is that there is such a preponderance of books written on the Bible side of this question and so very few upon what I consider the right side—so much so, that it seems by merest chance that the books or literature came my way, whereby I was saved from the fate of passing out in ignorance of these precious truths that I have recently discovered: and I feel so grateful to those champions for truth, both men and women, from whom I have received this light, that it seems but fitting that I should offer this volume that, perchance, it may fall in the hands of some poor tempest-tossed hungry soul as was I, who could not find satisfaction in the pabulum offered by the Orthodox Churches; which is only faith and belief in things incompatible to human reason, unless reason has been distorted and dwarfed to fit said creed. The spiritual food offered by the Orthodox Churches partakes altogether too much of the nature of chaff to be soul-satisfying.

Another reason which I will offer, is the common error of trying to impress the world that the supremacy of the Christian nations over the other nations of the earth, the Dark Continent Africa and the South Sea Islands is owing to our being in possession of this Bible, and their being without it. This is a grave mistake that the world has got to outgrow. That the Caucasian race has been in advance of the other races of the world, and that it has been in advance away back in the past, before the Bible was compiled or had anything more than a fragmentary existence, is a fact

in history that can be proved as well as anything that has been recorded. That the Caucasian race have achieved much, that they have made marvelous discoveries along the avenues of science and all that stands for the upbuilding of mankind in this life, that they have harnessed the forces of nature and made them subservient to man's will and to contribute to his comfort and happiness, none would wish to gainsay.

That this work of advancement was in progress long before the Bible was heard of, and is still in progress entirely independent of it, I shall expect to fully substantiate in process of this work, and that civilization has reached this high attainment not in consequence of this Bible but in spite of this "Holy Keep."

There are pages in the world's history so repugnant to human nature, or, our better nature, and so horrid in detail, atrocities so revolting wrought in the name of the Bible and the God therein described, that to recount or take a retrospective view, even the bit of modern American history which details the trial and execution of the Salem "witches"—this is but as a drop in the bucket—is enough to make the blush of shame and indignation, even while I write, suffuse my face to think what Ignorance and Superstition and Bigotry have committed in the name of the Bible or Israel's God.

That the Christian world is indebted to the Bible and its teachings—except as it may prompt mankind in the spirit of aggression to hold and occupy by force—for its present attainments, and its being so far in advance of the rest of the world, is one of the common errors of Christianity.

The attitude of the Christian Church toward her subjects and the outside world when she was vested with the ruling power or held the reins of government I will touch upon later.

Why the Caucasian race, the race to whom we belong, is possessed of more intelligence than the brother races is among the mysteries unsolved, and unsolvable. There is a vast amount of mystery in our world that must ever remain mystery: the origin of life and how we were first called into existence are mysteries with which it is impossible for us to cope. When we contemplate illimitable space, and the incomprehensible duration of eternity, and the unfathomable mysteries of the stellar universe, we can only say that the finite cannot comprehend the Infinite.

CHAPTER II

But, however great the mystery relative to our being, we are here the cause of all this controversy and trouble: trouble so profound in its nature that an incarnate God has to be crucified to appease the wrath of an angry Father God, and still his wrath is not appeased: for in the Scripture we read that, Broad is the road that leads to destruction and many there be that enter in thereat, and straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life everlasting and few there be that find it. So it is plain that this Orthodox God, if we are to believe his word, has decreed that a large majority of mankind are doomed to perdition: and I say, should man be denied the privi-

lege of searching for another God that perchance is not so arbitrary and difficult to please?

It has been said "An honest man is the noblest work of God." This I am not prepared to contradict, nor would I wish to.

It has also been said that an honest God is the noblest work of man.

Now this looks as though there might be a desire lurking somewhere among the children of earth for a change of Gods. For that the God of Israel or the Bible is not honest and that he is a poor God upon which to rest a faith for future happiness I shall expect to prove, and the proof I shall expect to find and point out, so that there need be no mistake, within the contents of the Book itself, the Bible.

Readers, do you not feel that there is a change to take place? There are many things among the human activities that point in this direction. Just recently a book came to hand entitled "The Coming King," written by a man by the name of White; he, with prophetic vision, announces a change which he declares to be close at hand. His change is to be brought about in this wise. The Resurrection is soon to take place, and the "little flock" mentioned by Christ is to meet their Redeemer in the air; Mount Olivet is to be cleft asunder, one-half is to move eastward, while the other half moves westward, and the New Jerusalem Christ is going to bring from Heaven with him and is going to settle this tremendous city between these sections of this historic Mount. I have read Mr. White's book, and he tells this in great sincerity and claims that this is sure to take place, because this is in accordance

with the true interpretation of the Scripture. Just think of it. The Scriptural account of this city says that the angel with his reed makes it out to be 375 miles square. Will not this be a wonderful sight to those who are permitted to see when Christ nears Palestine with this vast aggregation of city blocks. Then in the account it is also stated (see Rev. xxi. 16), "*That the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.*" . . . Just for a moment pause and think what a city this is that Christ is to bring from Heaven with him when he comes to make up his Jewels.

I was speaking of mystery a short way back. Here is another I will speak of that has appealed to my mind many, many times: the diversity of human belief and the tenacity with which the majority will cling to what they believe. Here this Mr. White commences his book at the commencement of the Bible and follows it to the close, and declares in his deductions that there is no superfluous Scripture, but every word and miracle are necessary to bring out this wonderful plan. "How man was lost, and how he is to be finally restored, at the second coming of Christ." That is, those who are qualified, while the rest are eternally lost.

Now we have no right to doubt that Mr. White firmly believes the doctrines as set forth in his book; it does not look rational that an individual would write for publication a book involving the labor that has this one, unless he firmly believes the things therein set forth.

This school of faith—"The second coming of Christ and the general resurrection of the body"—has con-

siderable of a following. Some twenty years ago I came in possession of a volume upon this same faith, written by one Charles T. Russel, called "The Millennial Dawn." He claimed the Bible was not rational of belief except in the light of this doctrine: and with no light at this time, I tried to force myself to believe, and at the time if asked I would have said that I believed this doctrine "Second Adventism."

Both of these authors were in harmony in regard to this stupendous change, that it was drawing close at hand. My belief in this doctrine was of comparatively short duration, because Mr. Russel, and Mr. White as well, had done just as had been done before, had taken fragments from this Book of Books upon which to substantiate this supra strange "doctrine," and when I came to search the Scriptures outside of their Scriptural references I soon discovered that their creed would not hold water any more than the rest. I take no stock whatever in the belief of the "second coming of Christ" or of this resurrection as it is taught. And yet I believe firmly there is a change to take place in the religions of the world at no very distant day, because the popular creeds embody so much of error and the world has made such advancement since the inception of these creeds, and the Book upon which they are founded, and the truth is forcing its way into the minds of the people to such an extent that I believe at no distant day that the creeds of to-day are destined to tumble and crumble into indistinct decay just for the want of a following.

That there is unrest in the Christian churches, that there is something that gives them a worried look, one

does not need a very powerful searchlight to see; there has something happened within the last sixty years that makes them feel shaky, and they are wondering much about what Christ had in mind when he said, "I have many things to tell you but ye cannot hear them now."

Yes, I firmly believe there is a change coming.

I premise that the Christian people of the present time and, I might add, the majority of the people throughout Christendom, suppose the Bible to be the word of God in consequence of costly churches, the great theological seminaries and the highly learned divines sent therefrom to teach the people the ways of Godliness: and the glamor by which time has encircled this Book, so that they scarcely stop to think how we came in possession of it or what it teaches.

This, my friends, applies just as well to the mosque of the Mohammedan, to the temple of Diana of the Ephesians, or any temple erected to any of the ancient tribal gods who have had their day of triumph and decline and are now numbered with the things of the past. Therefore, declaring to you that it is not my aim or wish to offend the churchman on either side of the pulpit, but for what I believe to be for the advancement of Truth and for the best interest of mankind, I ask permission to lay aside the halo of Godliness, the robe of sanctity and the glamor by which time has encircled this Book the Bible and to use the greatest gift God has bestowed to man, Reason, and make a brief examination of the contents of this ancient Book without prejudice, let or hindrance, and see if we truly believe this Book to be a revelation from

the Infinite, Omnipresent, Omniscient, All-Wise and Omnipotent God.

One of the strangest problems that confronts me at this time is the way so many people who seem intelligent on other subjects and yet are so purblind and display so little sense and judgment in regard to this tremendous slavish error, namely, that the Bible is a revelation from God. One reason for this, no doubt, comes about in this wise: It is not uncommon to hear from the pulpit, in fact, it is the burden of their teachings, that if we had been deprived in any way (and that it came so near happening several times that it fairly makes one shudder) of this blessed Bible and the wonderful things to be learned therefrom, how man was lost through our first parents' transgression, how Christ left his throne in heaven at the right hand of God the Father, became incarnated, was with man thirty-three years, was crucified, dead three days, raised from death, ascended to heaven and sits again at the right hand of God the Father to make intercession for the children of men—that, if we were without this knowledge, we would be in total ignorance and without one ray of light or hope in regard to God's will to mankind. So, you see, the plan is that heaven can only be reached through a proper understanding of the Bible, and this can only be obtained through the superior knowledge and sanctity of God's vicegerents, the vicar and the priest.

I had in mind to ask Bishop Foster a few questions, but it is not him alone. I will include all of the bishops of all of the Christian creeds, all of the clergy, the whole of the priesthood, all who wear the mitre, robe

and stole. If there is no other way given under heaven whereby man must be saved but by the blood of a crucified God, and this knowledge is drawn from this Book, the Bible, and this Bible, you say, is the infallible word of God, I would be pleased to ask you a few questions.

With the light of modern science, Astronomy and Geology, do you believe the Scriptural account of creation, and particularly that part which relates to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, that God, after creating Adam, in order to get him a consort, puts him into a profound sleep, removes one of his ribs, and from this rib creates Adam a wife?

Do you believe that in this Garden of Eden, where God places this first pair, that a snake appeared and carried on social and intelligent converse with Eve, and decoyed her into this act of transgression, which brought death into the world, and places mankind in a lost condition from which there is no retrieve only by "blood atonement"?

While this snake was doing this incalculable damage, did he stand erect, poised on the point of his tail while talking to Eve; and did he from thenceforward have his perpendicularity horizontalized in consequence of meddling with things pertaining to God?

Embodied in these first three chapters of Genesis is an account upon which hangs the whole Christian religion. Cut out these three chapters and you have removed the whole foundation upon which Christianity rests. Do you not think Christianity rests upon a mighty shaky and exceedingly flimsy foundation? Because if mankind was not lost through this first pair there was no necessity for this act of Deicide, as re-

corded in the New Testament. It is not uncommon at this age to hear this Scriptural account of Adam and Eve and the snake in the Garden of Eden casually referred to by the pulpiteer as a probable myth without seeming conscious that if this first account is myth, its counterpart, "the story of a crucified God," is a falsehood.

It is with some difficulty that I select a few questions at this time, there is such an immense number to choose from that were I to interrogate you upon all the unreasonable, unbelievable things that we see in this venerable old Book we would have a volume that would greatly exceed my present plan, so will make but a few more promiscuous selections.

Do you believe this account as recorded in Genesis vi. 6: "*And it repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth, and it grieved him at his heart*"?

So this great male potentate sits in council, and concludes to destroy all life upon the earth, by bringing a flood of waters upon it. And life's tragedy would have ended, and the turmoil ceased, had not Noah have found grace in the sight of God, and was thereby let into the secret of what God was contemplating and was given instructions in the art of ark-building and built this ark as per account and Noah and his family and the animals of the earth were thereby saved?

See Judges xv. 16 to 19. Do you believe that Samson slew one thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass? Verse 18: "*And he was sore athirst, and called on the Lord, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst and fall into the hands of the uncir-*

cumcised." Verse 19: "*But God clave a hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout, and when he had drunk his spirit came again and he revived."*

See 2 Sam. vi. Do you believe the story of Uzzah, "*When he put forth his hand to steady the ark of God, when the oxen shook it, that the anger of God was kindled against Uzzah and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God*"?

See Gen. xix. 26. Do you believe the pathetic story about Lot's wife, who, for no greater offense than looking back upon the destruction of all that was near and dear, but for this offense was changed to a pillar of salt?

See Ex. xxxiii. 20 to 23. Do you believe that the infinite God said to Moses at one time: "*Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock, and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen*"?

See Ex. xxiv. 9, 10, 11. "*Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink*"?

See Ex. xxii. 18. Do you believe that the infinite God ever said to Moses and that the edict was to remain in full force to the end of time: "*Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live*"?

See Num. xx. 10, 12. Do you believe "*That Moses and Aaron in the wilderness of Zim gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank and their beasts also. And this displeased God because the rock was not smitten in his (God's) name. So Moses lost his chance of going on to'ther side of Jordan.*"

See Joshua x. 12, 13. Do you believe that Joshua "in the sight of Israel," when in the heat of one of their great battles with the Philistines, said, "Sun stand thou still upon Gibeon and thou Moon in the Valley of Ajalan." "And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies"?

And please tell us if Joshua stopped the sun for a whole day what difference it could have made with his business about stopping or monkeying with the moon? Now it seems this account was taken from the book of Jasher. And we would be pleased to know, Was the book of Jasher the word of God?

See Judges i. 19. Do you believe, as here stated, "*And the Lord was with Judah: and he drove out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron*"?

See 2 Kings ii. 23, 24. Do you believe that Elisha after healing the waters of Jericho, "*And as he went up from thence unto Beth-el: and so he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up thou bald head; go up thou bald head.*" "*And he turned back and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord.*" "*And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them*"?

See 1 Kings xxii. Do you believe the account contained in this chapter, in regard to Ahab, King of Israel: how God held a council in heaven, to determine wherewith he might persuade Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead, "*And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he (the Lord) said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now, therefore, behold the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all thy prophets.*" Do you believe this account? I can only give a summary of this account; the student should read this chapter carefully. I will only say the plan worked complete and Ahab was slain.

See 2 Kings xiii. 20, 21. Do you believe this story? "*And Elisha died and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming of the year.*"

And it came to pass as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when he was

let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood upon his feet.

See Ex. xxxii. 16. Do you believe God wrote with his own hand, as per account: "*And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God graven upon the tables*"? Ten commandments, given as a system of moral principles, upon which Israel were to base their conduct. One of these says, Thou shalt not steal. Then, see Ex. xi. 1, 2: "*And the Lord said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt.*" "*Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbor, and every woman of her neighbor, jewels of silver and jewels of gold.*" "*And the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians.*" The plan was to borrow all that they could just before their exodus through the Red Sea. You should read this account carefully and then consider. Do you believe it? Do you believe upon these same tables the Infinite God wrote, "Thou shalt not kill"? Then turn to Deut. 16, 17: "*But of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance; thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth: But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites; the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.*" Do you steadfastly believe all this?

Nothing short of utter extermination seems to meet this God's requirements.

In concluding these interrogations, see Rev. xii. 7-9. Do you believe this account? "*And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the*

dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven." "*And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world."*

I might continue these questions indefinitely, but these will answer the purpose intended.

I do not expect you to answer these questions; the fact is, it places you in an embarrassing situation. The contradictory, unreasonable, absurd quotations with which this "Book" is replete, places you right between the Devil and the deep sea: if you say you don't believe, your occupation is jeopardized; if you say you believe, then your God is so savage and vindictive, so vacillating in his nature, so unreliable of his power, at one time he will stay the sun and moon in their course, and rain down rocks from heaven to slay or exterminate the inhabitants of Canaan for his "chosen," then at another time he cannot cope with the common foe, the Jebusite, or Canaanite, because they have chariots of iron: so exacting in small things, so jealous of other gods, so supra-sensitive that he is going to be slighted or not properly revered. There seems to be the blight of destruction pervading his whole domain. Even the orthodox heaven seems not exempt from the blight and curse of war, for 'tis recorded in the Book that there was war in heaven, and why may this not occur again and again?

These questions were asked to the religious teachers, the priests and clergy, but as my work is not intended more for them than the rest of the world, what I may say hereafter will be for all who are interested.

CHAPTER III

I am satisfied that in regard to religion the world has gone wrong. I would not think of censuring any class or creed, no individual or any number of individuals, at this age, for this deep-rooted error that has cost the world millions of lives and billions of treasure. We have gone astray, and we must retrace our steps.

Just how it came about that there has been such a digression from the paths of Truth is difficult to fully explain, but we will do the best we can; there is one thing certain, that we are now only emerging from the "dark ages" of ignorance and superstition, and upon the dial of eternity the hands have moved so slightly since man has begun to record his history that the sweep would hardly be discernible.

Then, I would ask, is it any wonder that the old clouds of superstition and ignorance should still lower o'er our mental horizon? And is it to be wondered at that from this ooze of ignorance that there should be in existence a book similar to this very book we call the Bible? The printing press is comparatively of but recent date, and that the old traditions, myths, dogmas and legends of the ages should appear in print is not so much to be wondered at, in fact, it is what might have been reasonably expected. But at this age of scientific enfoldment and the diffusion of knowledge, to see the great majority of our college professors and of our teachers and leaders clinging to and pretending to make the Book the foundation of their faith, and that from its pages may be gleaned the loftiest con-

ceptions of human virtue, in short, to teach that by taking the Bible for a guide you can never go wrong, is also among the great mysteries to me of the present day.

The Bible, as it is taught by the theologian, *I firmly believe to be the basest of slander upon the Infinite.* This may look to many like blasphemy, and some may have the old-time feelings arise that God should be avenged: but, my dear friends, remember the world has outgrown many of its superstitions and has many more to outgrow. I may be somewhat bolder in my declarations than I otherwise would be, were it not for the fact that it is not long since that I was trying to make myself believe the Bible to be the inspired word of the Almighty. And that the New Testament was the true account of how God had sent or permitted his only begotten Son to become incarnated, to live with mankind here on earth, to suffer and die to save a sin-cursed world from Hell: and I was studying the Scripture and pondering its pages, trying to reconcile them to reason, which I could not; trying to discover the munificence and infinite goodness of the Creator in his written word, which I could not.

I had just about fully made up my mind that mankind was in total ignorance of what the Almighty might have in store for him beyond the grave. I had strong desires to know, if there was anything to be known, and as earnest desire means earnest prayer, I therefore prayed for light upon this momentous subject, "Do we survive the change called Death?"

Well, whichever, or however, I am satisfied that I have received light upon this subject.

What farther I have to say along this line is reserved for Part II. of this work. I had come to conclude that materialism was the most rational conclusion and I found myself upon the ragged edge of what seemed a lost hope. And when the light came, and I became convinced that there was a clew to this mystery of death, and I found myself outside of this cloud of bigotry and superstition, and I could behold the innumerable entanglements by which I had been surrounded, the cobwebs of dogma and tradition, the slime-pits of error, the rubbish and muck of ignorance brought from the misty past, all interwoven into such a web of deception, that I thought it but fitting to lay a few planks that, perchance, they might be of some assistance in effecting the release of such as may desire.

Because I declare to you, and I speak from experience: That I enjoy myself much better than I did before I received this new light—Modern Spiritualism. You may be led to think from what I have said up to this time that I would have the Bible annihilated; not so. I do not pretend to say but there is much to be learned from this venerable, ancient old Book that is of intrinsic value, and that it contains proof undeniable of things of the greatest importance to the human race, when rightly understood. I shall aim to point out these truths as we come to them, but their application properly falls into Part II. of this work.

Is the Bible a revelation from God?

What a momentous question to contemplate! What has this question cost the world in blood and treasure to get it established in what is called the religious

world! And how established? Let us make a casual survey. The theologian's claim is this: "Since the Bible is established as the infallible word of God throughout all Christendom, the burden of proof to the contrary rests with its opposers."

Now here let us enumerate a few things that the Bible stands for, that we may see how they tally with our present-day conceptions of good conduct, morality, justice and virtue.

(1) The Bible stands for human slavery from cover to cover. Our martyred president, Abraham Lincoln, is said to have said (as well he might), That the most vexing problem relating to the Civil War was the slave question, and the Bible, which was read alike by both the people of the North and South, and by both believed to be the inspired word of God, and both praying for victory in his name.

(2) The Bible stands for race hatred and race extermination.

(3) The Bible stands for polygamy and incest.

(4) The Bible stands for the Divine right of Kings.

(5) The Bible stands for subterfuge and crime of the blackest character of every name and nature.

(6) The Bible stands for lechery and lust and obscenity which would exclude it from the United States mail were it called by any other name than the Bible.

(7) Now here is another thing the Bible stands for and is woven into the whole fabric of the Christian religion and preached from every pulpit and impressed upon the child's mind in the Sunday-school; that is Scapegoat Salvation. Or, to make it plainer, forgiveness of sin and all manner of crime, and that this door

of opportunity to enter eternal bliss and dodge the consequences of wrong-doing stands ajar until the eleventh hour of life.

I have enumerated here sufficient for our present needs. Now let me ask you, Is it enjoyable to believe in and worship a God of such attributes as those above named? Have I misstated or exaggerated in what I have said the Bible stands for? I certainly have not, and in due time will call your attention to the Scripture that will verify all I have said and more.

But our orthodox friends will say, "But Christ came after a lapse of 4000 years and gave us a new dispensation, and through him Life and Immortality were brought to light." Very well, but we can't throw the Father God and the Old Testament Scripture overboard; you might as well expect the top of a tree to flourish and bear fruit with the trunk and roots removed, as to expect Christ's words to endure and the Father's to pass into "innocuous desuetude."

I wish to call your attention to the conduct of the Father God first, but the Son shall receive due attention when I arrive at that part of my work.

Is the Bible a revelation from God?

Here is a clipping from the secular press which may serve as a pointer:

"Churches dying of consumption. Rev. William H. Babcock, Pastor of the First Reformed Church, Bayonne, N. J., one of the largest and wealthiest congregations in Hudson County, surprised a large congregation Sunday night by saying he would apply to the classes for permission to preach the truth two years as an experiment.

"The minister said that after studying science, geology and philosophy, he had come to the conclusion that the Bible was not a solid chunk of truth.

"He said the record of the construction of the universe as found in the Bible, and according to science and geology, conflict.

"The Roman and Protestant churches, he added, are dying of slow consumption, due to the fact, he said, that the creeds, forms and systems of the sixteenth century are totally useless for the twentieth century.

"'If I had known as much about the ministry twenty years ago as I do to-day,' he said, 'I never would have put my head in the noose, but now that it is there, I will fight for freedom.'"

Now let us ponder boldly, for I hold 'tis a base abandonment of reason to resign our right and privilege of thought. Here is a minister of the Gospel in active service making overtures to a body or power to whom he seems under obligations, for the privilege of preaching the truth as an experiment. He acknowledges that for twenty years he has been preaching that which he has not believed, with a conviction that all of this time he should have been preaching the truth. He asks the privilege of preaching the truth as an experiment for two years. Suppose he is granted the privilege and he preaches the truth two years and the experiment fails. What then? What is to be understood from making a failure in preaching the truth? Is it the question of revenue and emolument he has in mind, and if that were to shrink he would pronounce the experiment a failure? And after making due apology and being granted forgiveness for his rash act, does he expect to

be reinstated and to again preach that which he owns is falsehood?

Rev. Wm. H. Babcock is only one of a very large class, as is apparent from outbreaks like the above, which are of common occurrence of late from the press and pulpit throughout all Christendom; they bewail the situation of empty pews and lack of interest and that a dry rot has struck the church.

And why? Because the whole thing is false. If the Scriptural account of creation is untenable, because it will not square with modern science, geology, astronomy, and philosophy, the whole plan of salvation as invented by a wily priesthood has eventually got to pass, for it has no better foundation of fact, truth or reason than has the Biblical account of creation.

What may have been the motives of the writers who have written derogatory of the Scripture, and have passed to the beyond, we can only judge from what they have written. But it is evident to my mind that many of them did not have a knowledge of the things that may be known at this time or they would have written differently.

Had I have been certain that the Bible was an imposture, this alone could not have prompted me to write a book: but this, coupled with the proof of Modern Spiritualism, gives the matter a very different aspect and prompts me to write.

It is apparent to the student who has studied and critically investigated from all of the data obtainable, both from the Scripture and the realm of psychic literature, and the rational conclusion based upon psychic

phenomena, that had Thomas Paine have had a knowledge of things obtainable at the present day he would have given to the world a different book than this "The Age of Reason" in many of its details.

One is where he says, on page 6: "I believe in one God and no more, and I hope for happiness beyond this life." Now I will stand against this, not entertaining the least doubt, as I shall expect to prove, that it would receive full sanction from Thomas Paine. That I believe in one God—Infinite Intelligence—and no more; but as the finite cannot comprehend the Infinite, the God question is one we should not wrestle with, only as relates to right living and doing good to our fellow-men. And from the tangible evidence that our loved ones who have crossed the mystic river Death, still live and can and do communicate back to us in earth-life. Therefore, I have a full assurance, from the evidence, of a life to follow this and that happiness will increase with knowledge through the cycles of eternity. But as this subject is reserved for another part of my work, we must wait until we have worked our way up to it. Mr. Paine and I may differ essentially in regard to some things, but where he says the Bible is a book of priestly invention, and the God described therein is a man-made god, with all the attributes of the barbarous race by whom he was created, there "we are two souls with but a single thought." Upon this our minds are identical.

Robert G. Ingersoll could see and point out most vividly the flimflams, incongruities, contradictions, inconsistencies, absurdities, and gewgaws of priestly invention to enslave a world, and his life and work in the

way of freeing mankind from error must ultimately be productive of much good; but in regard to a post-mortem existence he expresses the same doubt as that of Thomas Paine. He entertains a hope of immortality, but makes no pretensions that there is any proof.

Here is another author who takes a negative position in regard to the Bible being of divine origin. A. J. Dadson, author of "Evolution and Its Bearing on Religions." I will give you a brief extract from this able author that you may see the deplorable situation in which his deductions have landed him; his views are purely materialistic, that is, that death ends all. I will give the excerpt here and reserve the privilege of making a few observations afterward.

"From every reasonable argument, we may conclude that the planets of our own and other systems are inhabited, and that life and death have been going on indefinitely in the past and will go on indefinitely in the future. What then is to become of the infinite number of existences when they enter into their immortal life? When this world has run its course, it will have produced so great a number of human creatures, that if they were all to reappear, there would not be standing room for them; and the same may be inferred from every other world in the Universe.

"Is this universal and infinite process of birth and death a rational ground for a belief in personal immortality? Or is it not rather a strong argument against it? Hume long ago wrote: 'How to dispose of the infinite number of posthumous existences ought also to embarrass the religious theory. Every planet in every solar system we are at liberty to imagine peopled with

intelligent mortal beings; at least, we can fix on no other supposition. For these then a new universe must every generation be created beyond the bounds of the present universe, or one must have been created so prodigiously wide as to admit of this continual influx of beings. Ought such bold suppositions to be received by any philosophy, and that merely on the pretext of a bare possibility? . . . There arise, indeed, in some minds some unaccountable terrors with regard to futurity; but these would quickly vanish were they not artificially fostered by precept and education. And those who foster them, what is their motive? Only to gain a livelihood, and to acquire power and riches in this world. Their very zeal and industry are an argument against them.

“Again, what do we mean by a future life? The only thing about us that can be annihilated is consciousness. Matter and force remain indestructible. It matters not to me here whether or not I had a previous existence, inasmuch as the continuity—if I had a past life—was broken and I am therefore like two different persons. By a future life, for the same reason, we must mean a prolongation or survival of our consciousness, a carrying with us to the next world of all knowledge and remembrances of this, so that we may meet and know again those whom we knew in this life.

“This presupposes an indestructibility of consciousness by the terms of the argument; but we know from experience that the consciousness is temporarily destructible. Is that temporary destructibility, then, only possible, while the brain is a living organ, and impossible the moment it ceases to be a living organ?

Such an assumption seems almost a *reductio ad absurdum*.

"Science and experience offering no warrant for a belief in a future life, we must fall back again upon feeling; and what does this amount to? We desire passionately long, many of us, to live beyond this life, to meet again those who are gone from us, and whom we loved; we shrink from the thought of annihilation, *eternal nothingness*, when this life of disappointments and sorrow is ended. We think of our parents, of our wives and children, of our friends, and the *heart* repudiates the justice of any divine ordinance which has brought into being so much love and affection only to be destroyed in the grave.

"In every human life a tragedy is enacted, and we instinctively yearn for a better and happier home hereafter, where the soul's hunger shall be satisfied, and all the weary unrest shall be ended; when brotherly love shall take the place of strife, and the heart shall know no more sorrow. We look into this vast fabric of nature with all its solemn grandeur until the mind becomes bewildered and lost in the awful immensity; and we ask ourselves in fear and dread if there is never, in all the ages to come, to be any explanation of the great mystery. Eternity behind us, eternity before us; our lives a mere speck in the everlasting illimitable void! The thought appalls us, the intellect is distracted and the soul takes refuge in emotional aspiration.

"Philosophy interposes, and in the higher regions of thought declares that *explanation* is inconceivable, that the condition and processes of thought confine us

absolutely to the human circle, by and which the mind is impotent to act. Strive as we may to penetrate the 'hereafter' in search of some satisfaction to the eternal cravings for a solution of the mystery, those conditions inexorably draw us back to this finite life; and dissolve the fabric of every intellectual aspiration which we build with the materials of experience.

"And what other materials have we for even the highest and most abstract flights of the mind? A future life is unthinkable, God is inconceivable, and yet, as George Eliot said, 'duty remains as the most imperative of all calls upon us in our social relations.'

"It is a profound mystery about which science and philosophy must be silent and the emotional cravings confined to each individual."

CHAPTER IV

I have copied at considerable length from Mr. Dadson, for the reason that the thoughts embodied in the above extract I have revolved in my mind and ruminated upon them in their every detail much in my past hours of reflection. They are, I own, beyond the limit of the finite mind of man to cope, but will again remind Mr. Dadson, and all whom it may concern, that the finite cannot comprehend the Infinite in even the minutest of its details.

Mr. Dadson would postulate against the probabilities of a future life, or, what sounds better, a continuity of this life beyond this plane; "that if the planets of all the solar systems are inhabited by human beings

like our own, that the universe must in time become overcrowded." Now, Mr. Dadson, for your sake and for the sake of those who may be alarmed from your deductions, we will make a survey of the universe which must of necessity be finite and see if there is rational ground for alarm. Suppose there were a sun so distant that it would require 100,000 years for its light to reach our earth,—light traveling at the rate of, say, 11,000,000 miles per minute—what a spacious universe this would give us! Still this universe would be finite, because it would have a boundary. Multiply the diameter of this vast universe by 1,000,000 and then consider that were you to stand upon the borderland of this incomprehensible space you are still in the center of the unbounded, illimitable universe of the Infinite God.

So, my dear friends, when you become alarmed for lack of space, reach out—there will be no obstruction. This is to illustrate how utterly inadequate is the finite mind of man to comprehend the operations of the Infinite God.

The boundary of space is ineffable, incomprehensible; and whether or not the stellar universe is coextensive with boundless space, we cannot know now, nor do I see how it is possible for us to ever know, either on this side or the other of the Great Divide. Nor can it make much difference with us in regard to our present needs. I have no solicitude; if it is in accordance to the will of the Infinite that we are to have a continued existence, that there will be ample room for all we need have no alarm.

I do not wish to take up the time searching for the

boundary line of space, or where eternity began or where it is going to terminate. What I have essayed to treat of is within our mental scope. "Is the Bible a revelation from the Infinite, and do we survive the change called Death?"

I will now invite your attention to the portion of Mr. Dadson's quotation where he asks the question, "Again, what do we mean by a future life?" He says "it matters not to me here whether or not I had a previous existence inasmuch as the continuity (if I had a past life) was broken and I am therefore like two different persons."

Now, upon this proposition hinges the whole thing; this is a subject that I have discussed and pondered upon much. You are correct, Mr. D., if the chain of memory is severed, if our consciousness does not bridge the chasm of death, so that we may know the ones that lived and loved us here another life is nought. A belief or an assumption like this is no better than stark materialism.

I do not see why I should make an option between an eternal existence in the realm of Paradise, with all the resplendent grandeur by which it has been depicted by the preacher, or sink into an eternal dreamless sleep, if the chain of memory is severed; because I am to all intents and purposes annihilated, and a newly created entity appears upon another plane, which, from the very nature of the case, can be nothing to me whatever. Now let us consider for a moment how such an unreasonable doctrine as this should find lodgment in the human mind.

Of course, Mr. D. speaks of this only to show its

inconsistencies; he belongs to the ultra-materialistic school and does not throughout his whole work appear to entertain even a hope of a *post-mortem* existence.

But that there are those who believe just such strange and unreasonable doctrines as this I can have no doubt, for I have conversed with such and discussed the matter with them many times.

Now we will place a mark right here, because I wish to return again to this subject, after calling your attention to a point or two more from Mr. D.'s quotation. He says, "Science and experience offering no warrant for a belief in a future life, we must fall back again upon feeling; and what does this amount to?" Then the quotation and chapter closes with his lamentation over the sad situation of creation as surveyed from his viewpoint, which, to say the least, is sad indeed.

Now the thought suggests itself, what object did Mr. D. have in view when he gave this book, "Evolution and Its Bearing on Religions," to the world? I hold no prejudice, I respect the individual who has the courage to speak his convictions; and I entertain no doubt but Mr. D. has written just as he believes. And now I would ask, would he be happy in the thought that through his book he is converting the world to materialism? The question of evolution is a matter not germane to the present situation. We have been here upon the earth, according to history and all the schools of faith and belief, a long time, and just how we were evolved does not matter so much since we know that we are here. The question germane to the situation is,

After Death, what? Or, as Job puts it, If a man die, shall he live again?

Now the fight is still on in regard to this question, for aught I can discover, and we are here right in the heat of the battle just as much as ever.

Now I will postulate that when an individual originates a book upon any religious faith or cult, or even politics, he has a desire for adherents to the doctrines set forth in his work; it is correct that he should. But I do not hold that it can be conducive of any good to try to overthrow any religion, cult or creed whatever; however inconsistent to reason and truth it may appear, unless you can by a course of reasoning point out the errors and inconsistencies, to the adherents of said creed or cult, and then bestow to them something which you consider better suited to their needs, and that will ultimately make them happier and make the world the better for it.

Now, I hope I shall not be misunderstood. But if the plan of the Infinite had been unfolded to me and every secret of nature were revealed, and the destiny of mankind, his whence and whither were made as plain as an open book, and it were shown to me so clearly that there were no possibility or chance for reading wrong, That death ends all, and all that stands for religion of every character were but a cobweb of delusion, I believe that I would carry this secret with me to the grave, and let the world roll on in ignorance of this melancholy truth. Now, my friends, I cannot vouch for this in very fact, for reasons that are obvious; but I think I speak the truth, because there was a time, a dark hour in my life, when hope and belief in

immortality had fled; and I took no pleasure in speaking of it, nor did I even to my nearest friends, not even to my wife.

Then I would ask if, on the other hand, a revelation or discovery has been made which gives a greater joy than that obtained from the old myths and dogmas of the misty past, would it not be incumbent upon me to gladly give the news to you? Now, here I will premise an illustration, for the sake of defining my position, so you may understand.

If you were going to till a piece of ground for the purpose of producing a crop, the first thing to consider would be the preparation of the soil. And thus with me, before I sow the seeds of this eternal Truth, a task confronts me of gigantic proportions.—I have the errors and prejudices of the ages to contend with, the muck and mildew of the centuries flown, whose very breath is blight and ruin. But I believe in God's good time that the truth is ultimately to triumph. I believe firmly that

“Truth crushed to earth will rise again;
The eternal years of God are hers;
While Falsehood, wounded, writhes with pain
And dies among her worshippers.”—*Bryant*.

I believe the time is to come

“When Error is to decay and Truth grow strong,
When Right shall rule supreme and vanquish wrong.”

So, my friends, I will prosecute my work along this line, hoping to free your minds from error, and that in time you may be led into the paths of Truth.

I shall aim in making my citations from the Scripture to point out clearly their inconsistencies in regard to their being plenarily inspired of God, for I am fully satisfied that the Bible holds the Creator in a bad light, and that it is slander, and that it is to pass from the earth as a revelation from God, and take its place where it belongs; and, as I have before said, where its true worth may appear, as I shall hope to show you later on.

Again, I do not wish to be misunderstood, and to disabuse your minds from a misconception that I would have the Bible annihilated and the churches closed, and everything that appertains thereto abolished. That is a mistake. I am no such iconoclast as that. I want what the Rev. Mr. Babcock sued for: I want the truth preached, for as I behold it from my viewpoint, if the teachings as set forth from the pulpit and catechisms for the ages past is not wrong, there is nothing wrong.

Now, I will give a quotation from the Scripture as it is recorded in the sixteenth chapter of St. Mark. The concluding words of the chapter and of the Gospel according to him:

“Afterward he (Christ) appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up

serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following—Amen.”

Now we will take a retrospective view reaching back o’er the past, according to Biblical chronology, 4038 years: where Eve held converse with that subtile snake in the Garden of Eden. Here I shall make no criticisms; let us assume that this happened just as recorded.

I will quote a few verses, beginning with the third chapter of Genesis:

“Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent. We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”

I have quoted to verse seven, this history is so familiar that I need not quote further. The plan of salvation boiled down, amounts to this: From the disobedience of this first pair, wrought through the instrumentality of this "fallen angel" in the guise of a snake brought the curse of God upon them, and their posterity and after a period of about 4,000 years a Redeemer comes, and here are the conditions whereby man may be saved.

Now in a matter of so great concern and co-extensive with the human race: we will eliminate all superfluous words, but save all the essentials of the plan. "Man fell from grace, through our first parents' disobedience, the curse of God resting upon them and their posterity; thus doomed to endless hell till a Redeemer comes, then the conditions, *Believe and be baptized and he that believeth not shall be damned*. And here are the signs to follow such as believe; they are immune from harm if they take up serpents, or, if they drink any deadly poison it shall not hurt them, they shall speak with new tongues, etc. The Master makes use of this expression: "*All who have ears to hear, let him hear*." This I will say. But I must own that the English language is too sterile of expression to convey to the mind of the believer the awfulness of the situation were he to let reason take the place of bigotry and blind devotion.

Now it must appeal to the mind of the reader, that this is a critical situation, and the chances for reaching heaven are not as good as we might desire, and might have been impressed by the good parson; but my friends these are the words of Jesus Christ, the son of the living God, if we believe the Bible plenarily inspired.

The love of God is an expression very common with the believer and religious teacher:

"*God is Love*," is another common expression. Does the Scripture prove this? "*For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life*," has been put in decorative form and hung upon the wall in the believer's chamber to give comfort and consolation in his hour of trial and adversity. But Christ is not said to have said this. But to get back to our subject: The "signs that are to follow such as believe."

Now I would ask you could the Orthodox Devil, with horn and hoof concoct a scheme whereby he could reap a greater harvest for his Orthodox hell than this? That we are to be saved by belief and baptism. Baptism might not be so bad, unless it were to take place through the ice with the thermometer at zero as I have known of its being done, yet to avoid eternal hell this task might still look slight. But to believe to that extent that you may drink the apothecary's deadliest drug and yet remain unharmed, reduces the plan of salvation to a *reductio ad absurdum*. So here we have it; God has prepared a lovely place somewhere so beautiful and grand that it transcends the finite mind of man to grasp, which seems to give "his only Begotten Son" pleasure in referring to with expression like this: "*In my Father's house are many mansions*." My Father's Kingdom, and other similar illusions to this realm of bliss, and for what purpose? I would ask. Now if this Son is coeternal with the Father as Theology teaches, the Son understood the whole creative scheme and plan of salvation from the first. So what other solution can

we arrive at other than this? That it is this Triune Orthodox God's pleasure to sweep with the besom of destruction the billions of souls that have been produced through his creative fiat into the abyss of an eternal Hell. "*Everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels.*" (Matt. xv. 41.) "*And these shall go into everlasting punishment.*" (Matt. xv. 46.)

Now how could arrangements have been made to place us in a more deplorable condition. Not a ghost of a show for getting to heaven.

Oh! you may say I don't believe that, for Christ and the Apostles tell it different in many other places in the Book. What can that amount to, what the apostles—Paul included—may have said? Christ said these words according to your inerrant Bible, and this after His resurrection, just before he ascended to heaven, and resumed his place at the right hand of God. These were his last words to be given to this sin-cursed world, and he must have meant what he said; and while we have much to substantiate, but nothing to mitigate or contradict one syllable of this decree.

See (Matt. vii. 13.) "*Enter ye in at the straight gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.*" "*Because straight is the gate and narrow the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*"

Also (Luke xiii. 23.24.) "*Then said one unto him, Lord are there few that be saved.*" "*And he said unto them: "Strive to enter in at the straight gate; for many I say unto you will seek to enter in and shall not be able."*

And again if we conclude this road of reaching

heaven through the atoning "blood of Christ" too difficult, and our minds should revert back again to the law, and we were to conclude that, reaching heaven by the legal course were after all the surest way; then here again we are barred, for Christ says, see (John x. 7-8) "*Then Jesus said unto them again, verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.*"

All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers. Also (Acts. iv. 12.) "*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*"

Now I would ask what are we to do? When as the quotations under review shows us that Christ was under obligations to upbraid his disciples for not believing, who had walked with him during his whole ministry, had beheld him work his miracles even to the raising of Lazarus who had been so long dead, had even foretold his crucifixion and resurrection, and all that. Even Thomas after seeing all this and being assured by ten disciples, declared he would not believe until he had thrust his hand into the print of the nails in his hands and feet, and in the spear thrust in his side.

Then where are we at? I would ask, who have to take the whole thing by hearsay bridged by twenty centuries translated and re-translated, revised and re-revised, held in dispute by friends declared to be a priestly fraud by foes, and we are to believe or be damned, and then the signs to follow. But our souls rebel. Our inmost nature repudiates the thought—if we but use our reason—that stuff like this can be any part or parcel of a revelation of any God, but a God of human invention to enslave mankind; to dwarf his in-

tellect, and give a festering Priesthood absolute power over the affairs of church and state.

The Bible as proclaimed from the pulpit exerts an influence in two directions, and both are erroneous and bad.

First—By believing with a simple childlike faith you must inevitably become a fanatic, or what seems a better expression a bigot, because you preclude the right to reason intelligently upon all subjects relating to the Infinite.

Second—By rejecting the Bible as preached, and failing to discover its real value, (which I shall hope to show you bye and bye,) you on the other hand become a “Materialist” or an adherent to the school of Sadducees who disavow everything pertaining to continuity of life.

CHAPTER V

Now we will return to the subject where we placed the mark a few pages back; as I had a few more words to say along that line. If we survive the change called death, does our consciousness survive the change also? I think I amplified somewhat before upon the importance of this question.

Now from the foregoing scriptural excerpts, and many more that might be brought to bear: the maze of perplexities and bewilderments which confronts the Christian is apparent.

Christ tells us to strive to enter in at the straight gate, but many shall strive and fail; this leaves the believer's mind in doubt in regard to the fate of his

friends who may have striven; again the believer has many, who are near and dear, bound by the ties of affinity and consanguinity, by business relations and all that, who manifest no interest whatever in regard to things beyond this life. Again there are others who are in open rebellion to this exceedingly narrow plan of salvation. So the Christian reasons that since so small a fraction are to be saved, and such an overwhelming majority are to go where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, that 'twere better to have the chain of remembrance severed; to have all knowledge of this life and its every relation obliterated. The reason for such belief is very apparent; while the mother might reach heaven she might not find her husband or her children there, and that would mar her joy. We will reserve what more might be said along this line for the imagination of the reader.

A faith like this is tantamount, as I have said before to bald materialism. I do not say or wish to be understood that all Christians believe this; and to those who believe that we shall meet and know each other there, we will take a look at the other horn of the dilemma.

How will it be with him who has fought the fight, has endured unto the end; has won the prize and gained the goal of heaven, and when upon arrival, while wandering up and down upon the gold-paved streets of Paradise with its transcendent grandeur, perchance he meet an old time friend, a brother of the faith, who by belief and baptism made his election sure, and had preceded the other by a term of years; when after greeting he makes earnest inquiry of such and such of relative or friend of father, mother, wife, or child; he still runs o'er

the list of friends that he had hoped to meet in blank despair, as the friend makes negative responses to his inquiries; until at length silent with grief he sits him down and pensively recalls the language of the Book, which now for the first time he seems to fully comprehend. He ponders now upon the text which says: "*Many are called, but few are chosen.*" But where are they the others? There is but one other place according to your Book, and—that—is—Hell, and hell to all eternity.

I own these pictures are plain and unadorned, that they contain no beauty of expression. I have no gift in that direction, nor is it necessary to this my work. But I would ask you could heaven be heaven in any sense, were we but to meet only the merest fraction of those we knew and loved, however beautiful the place might be with a full consciousness that those we do not meet are lost.

You may say: "They should have studied the Book and found the straight and narrow way." If I have not answered you here, there is no need to try.

Think of the billions who have passed out precipitately by earthquake, fire, flood and sword: and the billions who have passed who have had no knowledge of your Book: Where are they? You need not answer. It is not inherent to our nature to be continually wrapped in gloom, but if we were to believe the Bible as taught by the servants of this Orthodox God, I do not see how we could ever light our faces with a smile.

That there have been many driven to insanity trying to reconcile these biblical absurdities to reason, none can gainsay.

You still insist that I have not been fair in my scriptural deductions. That they are but the whisperings of Satan, and that I am led by the "Evil One," that there is much within the Book to prove that what I have said is not true. Yes my friends, but what does that amount to, to disprove or to try to disannul one portion of the Bible with some other portion. When you go into this you will soon discover that your Bible will have so dwindled that there will not be enough left worth disputing or fighting over.

If the Bible is plenarily inspired of God and God all-wise, omniscient and omnipresent, and a misunderstanding of its contents were fraught with such terrible consequences: how could this Book his revelation contain one thing that could look like contradiction, or that anything but perfect harmony could pervade the whole volume, both the Old and New Testaments.

If this Book was God-given, it follows that it should be also God-preserved, and it is evident to the investigator or student that the Creator has had as much to do with guarding and preserving this Book, as he has in creating it, and no more, as I shall hope in time to show.

But just now I wish to call your attention to a few popular errors. It is an error deep-rooted in the public mind, that all that makes for the advancement of civilization, our schools and colleges (except Theological) all that stands for improvement, our ocean steamships, railroads, manufactories, and I might add all of the inventions for the destruction of human life, and everything that stands for progress is all owing to the Christian religion. This is a mistake.

The Roman said, before her decadence. "While stands the Coliseum Rome shall stand. When falls the Coliseum Rome shall fall, and when Rome falls, the world." And the Christian savant would make you believe, "While stands the Bible, Christianity will stand. When falls the Bible, Christianity must fall, and when Christianity falls civilization, and all that stands for improvement must tumble into indiscriminate chaos."

Now let us take a look back o'er the past, and see if this be true.

There was a time in the dark past when the Christian Church dominated all the affairs of state and taught her subjects to believe, that she ruled by "Divine Right," and that her mandates and decrees were handed down direct from God, and to breathe a thought derogatory to her laws were heresy and the poor apostate had justly incurred the wrath of God and God must be avenged: so the traitor was burned at the stake in public that the populace might see the awfulness of disobeying God.

Now here is the point: If the Bible is the word of God there can be no rational argument brought to bear, no reason can be given why it should not have held its place, and why if lost it should not be again restored, like the stone the builders rejected it should be restored and become the chief corner stone of every government throughout all Christendom. And if this Orthodox God is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, with neither change nor shadow of turning there can be no rational argument brought, or reason given, why the law God gave to Moses by which to govern his chosen people

should not be authority in all departments of jurisprudence at the present day.

Now I will just give a sample or two of this God-given law that we may study for a brief space the mysteries of Godliness. It is with difficulty that I choose these selections, because of the obscenity pervading the whole legislative bestowment, you should read this law for yourselves because it is not fit to put in modern print. See (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.)

Here are the samples I choose: Deut. xiv. 21, "*Ye shall not eat of anything that dieth of itself: thou shall give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto an alien: for thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God.*" How does this tally with our modern pure food law?

Again see Deut. xxi. 18, 21: "*If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shall thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear and fear.*"

These you will see are but fair samples, if you will take the time to examine or read the whole law for yourselves. It is certainly enough to put a smile on the face of the ungodly to think of the church-man pretending

that in this law is contained the will of the Creator to mankind.

The Coliseum for centuries has been a mouldering mass. Its ruins now mark the spot which was once the Roman's greatest pride: but she outgrew as civilization advanced the inhuman pleasure that the arena gave; but the earth remains and makes her revolutions now as then. But how with the Book? There is not now a civilized nation in the world, where the civil authorities are dominated by the church: And why? Because the world has out-grown church government; she has had a dark experience; a history written in blood; but that dark day has past and never can return; but though the clouds of superstition lower, the world progresses; progression is the law; the Truth is going to force its way through the ramparts of Ignorance and Superstition, and take her place upon the throne of reason; and the Christian religion as preached and taught to-day, is to pass. Because the foundation upon which it rests is false; its teachings are unreasonable and exert a bad influence upon the mind of the believer; gives him a false conception of the overruling power, and makes all nature look distorted.

The doctrine of the "remission of sins, or, that Christ's blood cleanseth from all sin, and all the concomitant passages of scripture which teach forgiveness or expiation from sin and crime through another, is another popular error, and fraught many, many times with terrible consequences. It has a tendency to encourage crime and fraud and dishonesty in all the avenues of business.

The poor deluded wayfarer beholding corruption and

graft in all the affairs of business both public and private, the exorbitant salaries paid to our public servants, the prestige given to predatory wealth, the impropportionate emolument paid to the learned priest and preacher, the meager reward for the common toiler. Environed by this situation of inequality, and taking cognizance of those who seem to be enjoying in full measure the pleasures of this world by their taking advantage of some kink or loop-hole in the civil law, becoming rich thereby, respectability restored by liberal bestowment to the church, sins all forgiven through his Redeemer, and at life's close a splendid funeral and a grand mausoleum.

Illustrations like the latter are of so common occurrence that they meet with only passing comment. This but briefly and imperfectly sets forth the result of false teaching drawn from this Book, and the enervating effect "vicarious atonement" exerts upon the morals of mankind.

The entomologist tells us that the larvae of the honey-bee are all one and the same thing when first hatched from the egg, and that the difference in individuality in the colony is brought about through the difference in nutrition; feeding the young bees with the requisite food to produce adults capable to the work required of them. So in this way there are bees in the same hive which have stings, and those which have not; whether this is true or no, I cannot say. I have not studied this science and can only hold it tentatively. But that there are certain things, that bear a striking analogy to this within the human race, we must admit. But this analogy does not obtain through physical—but

mental pabulum. That the innate nature of a child is inherited through its mother's milk does not seem to hold; because there seems to be no difference in the nature of the child whether nurtured from its mother's breast, or from the bottle. But upon the question of mental food this analogy obtains to the extent that has warranted the priest in saying: "Give me the training of the child for the first seven years, and you may have him ever afterward to make of what you may." This the priest has learned from long experience, and as a rule is no doubt true, but it has its exceptions now and then. The pastors of the Protestant Churches understand this well, and so they have their graded Bible lessons, adapted to the child just learned to lisp his earliest words, and thenceforth onward to his ripened years. It is a physiological or psychological fact that if a child is taken at the age of four or five, and certain impressions are made upon his mind continually, or even once a week, with suggestions, that said impressions must not be dismissed, and you will have the character of that child so formed, those impressions so stamped upon the cortex of the brain, that it will be in most cases impossible to eradicate; let the impressions be false or true. So you see from this that error dies hard. That the Truth has a formidable foe to deal with: but remember friends, "No question is ever settled until it is settled right."

Vicarious atonement is tantamount to "Scape Goat" forgiveness, it is an error. It is not founded upon any principle of justice, or reason: it is detrimental to human progress, it was revamped from a myth, and is doomed to be relegated to the waste-basket of oblivion.

Now I feel constrained to give you the prototype of "vicarious atonement" so that you may see how it originated and how much reason or justice it contains. See Lev. xvi. 20.22, "*And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, he shall bring the live 'Goat.' And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:*

"And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness."

Is there any occasion for comment upon such incongruous stuff as this? Here is where the doctrine of atonement as taught to-day had its origin. And when you take time to consider, you will see that the latter is as untenable as its prototype.

It has been since the dawn of Christianity one of the most effective weapons in the Christian's hand. "That whoever teaches anything in opposition to the Bible or the Christian's creed, that he was possessed of the devil and that such a person, he or she, was bad clear through; that they were bereft of all the attributes that stand for humanity or decency; that they are pessimistic, misanthropic, haters of everything that stands for good, and that they were studying evil continually, that they were trying to upbuild the Devil's Kingdom, by decoying certain Christians who were not properly armed with the sword of righteousness, into the bottom-

less abyss of hell. And that any religion, creed or belief, whatever, that did not accept the Bible in its entirety as God's holy word, and if this Book were not the foundation of their faith and creed, the whole thing was of the Devil, and must return to hell from whence it sprung.

Now let us see if we can discover what has given rise to these misconceptions, and misunderstandings in regard to this Book called "God's word," and also why and how this Book originated. In the first place, let us discover out the foundation fact upon which this whole thing, the Bible, and all the creeds, faiths, beliefs and disbeliefs, whichever they may be, and however false or true.

The whole thing is founded upon this: You may smile at this discovery that I make to you, but since we want the foundation fact, I will give it, and I think upon this we will all agree. Tis this: We die. The term of life is uncertain and death is certain. As one has said: "From the wondrous tree of life the buds and blossoms fall with ripened fruit, and in the common bed of earth the patriarchs and babes sleep side by side."

The scenes of earth and earthly things come to an end. No matter what the ties may be that bind us to this life no matter what attractions life may give, however high the hopes or ambition for sublunary glory, all must come to an end.

But though this common fate awaits us all, we all alike, say what we may, hold a common dread of this last visitor, Death.

And here we have it. The old, old story brought

down from the benighted past. That our first parents did some awful thing, and for this thing death comes to all that live, and God has hid himself from man and repents him of his sad mistake. But through this vast stretch of time commencing with this curse and fall, there have been certain ones possessed of a greater degree of righteousness than all the rest, who still communed with God. This gave him prestige and a monopoly over his fellow men. As is obvious 'twas then as now. Man had a great desire to hear and know of God. For this desired knowledge he must pay a price in tithes of all his increase, and thus the first order of Priesthood that we have any account of originated with the Jews. This of course, put this Priesthood or dynasty at the head of government, and as they received knowledge direct from God they ruled by divine right. Any unusual disturbance of nature was a "miracle," when the rainbow shone out after the shower they were reminded of God's promise not to again destroy the world by flood, but when nature assumed a threatening aspect, such as earthquakes, drought, and pestilence, it showed the people that God was displeased in consequence of some sin committed by them, the Priest must make intercession with God, the sin discovered and the transgressor—whether few or many—must be punished and this God was never appeased until the victims were slain.

But the Jews after a time, as we will see overworked their God racket; the other tribes having their respective gods, but not being so savage and warlike, attended more to industrial pursuits, outstripped the Jews in the march of progress, and finally became their captors.

The Jews lost their place upon the earth as a nation. Their God seemed to sink into decadence in proportion as they sank, and many ordinances and promises that were to endure forever have never been fulfilled.

But all was not lost, the innate nature of man remained the same; his thirst for knowledge, his desire to fathom the Infinite; to know of God; his dread of death; and what might lay beyond the mystic river; his proclivity to worship, or his proclivity for object worship; all this survived the golden age of the Jewish dynasty and from the ashes of the Jewish Priesthood was evolved the Papal, and the God who in the Jewish Priesthood has but one head, now comes out with three, and what now acts in the rôle of "Aaron and the goat" is the order of the Priesthood in lieu of Aaron, and "Christ the Son" in lieu of the goat.

Now it will be necessary to take a cursory survey of this Papal or Roman Priesthood, that we may better understand how the Protestant churches (for there are many) came into being.

CHAPTER VI

In the year thirty-three according to history there was a man crucified. A martyr because he taught things inimical to certain doctrines taught by the Jews. This martyr was himself a Jew, so we have a right to assume he had a fair understanding of the abuses and frauds. Priestcraft was practicing upon the credulity of the poor ignorant rank and file of their own, for purposes which were purely mercenary. The Jews were now a small tributary to the Roman Empire. That

this martyr was a good man we have a right to assume; that he had certain powers not understood by the common populace at that time, we have a right to assume. That he did nothing more than others might do by acting in obedience to certain laws which he was trying to inculcate upon his followers' or disciples' minds is evinced, where he says, "even greater things than I do shall ye do after me." We have a right to infer if his instructions were followed.

As I have not reached this Christ question as yet, I only wish to touch upon it this much for the purpose of showing the origin of the Mother Church, or the Papal Priesthood; so will proceed. This man was crucified, that could not mean much at that barbarous age. It was of common occurrence, and scores at a time were executed in this barbarous manner, either for the glory of God, or for violation of the civil law. But around this one certain traditions were attached, of wonderful things he did, called miracles, which I expect to speak of in their place. These wondrous things were elaborated upon, as time rolled on, more were attached with each succeeding year, and as the people—then as now—had a fascination for the marvelous there was a premium set upon lying for Christ's sake, and lying became a virtue. The accumulation of "miracles" and historical events became so great by one religious enthusiast trying to outdo his predecessor that they found themselves in possession of a superabundance; more than they could make use of; this has necessitated councils whose business it has been to take this vast amount of literature examine and determine by vote which was, and which was not the "word of God." The rejected por-

tion has been put in book form; (it makes a volume of about the same size of that contained in the canon); called the "Apocryphal New Testament." The Biblical student should read it, it will broaden his understanding.

It is not my intention to delve into history more than is strictly necessary to a fair understanding of the subject under review.

THE ROMAN CHURCH—Whether the Christian religion would have endured to the present day had it not have been for the fostering care of the Roman or Mother Church it is impossible to say. The Christian savant may think this a weak expression, and perhaps it is; but I do not think he can make it appear otherwise than that Christianity received a great impetus when it was adopted by the Emperor of Rome, Constantine the Great. By this emperor the Roman Catholic Church was established by law through the Roman Empire A. D. 325.

It becomes necessary here to a clear understanding of church history to make a quotation from his biography.

In 324, one year before the Nicene council held forth, he committed a deed that has thrown a dark shade over his memory. He had a gallant and accomplished son, named Crispus, who was exceedingly popular, and him along with Constantina, his own sister and others, he put to death on a charge of treason.

Niebuhr shows that it was not unlikely Crispus cherished ambitious designs. Next year occurred the great council at Nice. C. sided with the Orthodox fathers, probably for very heterodox reasons. "As yet

he was a Pagan, but his sense of justice; and his conviction of the growing importance of the Christians, both as a moral and political element in the life of the empire, had from the very first induced him to protect them."

As early as 313, he had everywhere granted them toleration and since then had continued to favor them more and more decidedly. "As president of the Nicene council, he opposed the Arians, on political grounds, as the weaker party; but not being theologically interested in the dissensions he refrained from active persecution.

"During the latter years of his life Christianity became the state religion. Pagan temples were closed and sacrifices forbidden. Yet it was only a short time before his death, which occurred July 22, 337, that he would allow himself to be baptized. The question has been much discussed, whether or not he was a Christian. The truth seems to be, that he looked upon religion as a *statesman* who feels that his first duty is to rule the nation over which he is set in an orderly and peaceable manner; had Paganism been still in its prime and possessed any real political vitality, it is not likely that a man of his secular temperament would have troubled himself in regard to the new faith." (National Encyclopedia.)

Now from this historical sketch let us take a view of the situation. "Constantine the Great," a title given him by the holy fathers. Consider his character, and then we will see what actuated him or the motives that led him to establish by law the Christian religion. "It says he sided with the Orthodox fathers, probably for

very heterodox reasons. Now heterodox means diametrically opposed to Orthodox. The truth is at this time the whole Roman Empire was to use a common phrase infested with gods. 'Tis said that at this time there were upward of a thousand gods; and where there are so many gods there must from the very nature of the case, and with all history to back it, where there is such a plurality of gods, there must be the proportionate amount of dissension and disturbance, which might perturb an emperor's slumbers, even assuming him conscienceless. These Pagans with gods conterminous on every hand and discovering the impotency of adjacent gods of neighboring hierarchies were losing faith in their own. And when this story reached their ears, in the fourth century, through Christian proselytes, that there had been upon the earth but a short time before an incarnate God, the son of the great God that made the world, the sun, the moon, and all the stars. That this God had been slain and by some strange philosophy not understood except by those to whom 'tis given to know there was a way through him that all mankind could get to heaven. This new story arrested their attention; the age was ripe for change, this new religion had a glamour or charm that seemed to soothe the weary breast, it was growing in strength while the Pagan religion was on the decline.

The age and situation were ripe for change. It does not look as though it required any superlative degree of intelligence at this juncture from a purely political standpoint, with one whose will is law, to conclude, to cement the whole body politic together with this new religion.

And now let us make a brief examination of this, now, wave-wide religion at its incept, and see what it consists of, and what it stands for. It now has the arm of the law thrown around it, and it can now carry out its persecutions high handed. The Pagan temples are closed, and now the Mother Church can formulate a creed commensurate to her needs, and entrench herself with what might look like a fair prospect of subjugating the world. Her Bible or canon, which was fresh and new, just bestowed by the Nicene council, was her own private property, with no particular fears of doubtful disputation, for reading and writing was a thing that the plebeian or private citizen as a rule knew nothing of. The holy fathers never intended they should; with prophetic vision they saw that education and progress would be inimical to their plans and purposes. The promulgation of secular knowledge was made a crime. The Bible was authority upon all subjects; and to delve into the mysteries of nature farther than what was necessary to the soul's welfare was prohibited. All that was necessary to man's welfare for the present and the future would be administered from God's "holy word" by the Holy Fathers.

The highest officer of the Roman Church is the pope, and the keys to the gates of heaven entrusted to St. Peter by Christ were bequeathed to this great and infallible potentate. So you see through the pope and his vicegerents "whatever is bound on earth is bound in heaven. And whatever is loosed on earth is loosed in heaven."

I will quote here from "Dadson" as he has penned just what I wish to say, and as it is in accordance with

the early Christian Church history, as you will find if you search the records.

“Christianity now for the first time presented to the world a criterion of truth which with the aid of the church, was intelligible to the meanest understanding. That *criterion of truth* was the Bible. And herein henceforth consisted the power of Christianity. The Bible in future was to be the standard of truth, and the ultimate appeal on all questions of knowledge. Everything that could not be justified by reference to this criterion was condemned as pernicious and unlawful.

A crusade was begun throughout Christendom against writings of every description; and books which could be construed into a contradiction of any part—even of a single sentence—of the Bible, were condemned to be burnt.

In time the awful Inquisition was established; and in addition to the destruction of books and manuscripts which contradicted “Holy Writ,” every person in whose possession such publications were found was seized by the officials of the Inquisition, and subjected to the most horrible tortures frequently resulting in death. The victims in thousands, after having been crushed and maimed in those awful infernal machines, were fixed to the stake and burnt alive, to the glory of the Christian’s God. And now for many centuries the earth indeed became a dreadful home for those who dared to think otherwise than as the church dictated. “The pope obtained supreme power throughout Christendom; emperors and kings became their subjects and trembled at the thunders of the church, and threats of excommunication.”

“The subjects of every monarch owed allegiance first to the pope, and dared not disobey a papal mandate even though it enjoined disloyalty and treason to their lawful sovereign. Every monarch held his crown by favor of the pope, and his ecclesiastics filled all the most important political positions in the world. No man could call his soul his own, and no man was safe from the accusation of heresy.

“Under the constant pressure of terror virtue fled from the human heart, and every feeling of love and tenderness was crushed and destroyed. Parents informed against their children, children against their parents; and the holy church completed their pious deeds of inhumanity by appointing them to assist at the torture and burning of one another.

“We need not dwell upon the well known and awful deeds of the church during the middle ages. No purpose would be served and the feelings are shocked almost beyond endurance at the bare recital of those deeds.

“The terror of the church became so great that people were careful to scrutinize every book in their possession, to see that it did not contain anything which contradicted the Scriptures; and great numbers burnt their libraries rather than run the risk of harboring however innocently heretical writings. Under such a widespread, vigilant and destructive influence it is no wonder learning died out, and civilization decayed. Toward the end of the fourth century Theodosius the Great, established *Inquisitions of Faith*, and certain laws were passed whereby the performance of specified Pagan rites subjected the Pagans to the penalty of death.

“Those who presumed to celebrate Easter on the same day as the Jews he condemned to death. The Greek language was now ceasing to be known in the west, and true learning was becoming extinct. The conflict and fermentation of so many opposite interests and tempers inflamed the passions of the bishops: and the ruling passions were the love of gold and the love of dispute. The Catholics as the Orthodox party was called, were now quite strong enough to defy the powers of the State, and they assumed the control of temporal as well as of spiritual matters. The Catholic Church was now practically the supreme power of the world, and the emperors were little better than her servants. The sword and wealth of the state were at her disposal and she used both without stint or mercy.

“Early in the fifth century the famous and beautiful Hypatia, daughter of Theon, the mathematician, lectured in Alexandria on the abstruse subjects of Greek philosophy. She was in every way a most admirable woman and possessed of the virtues and learning of the early Greeks. The episcopal throne of Alexandria was occupied at this time by a monster—unusually depraved even for that depraved age—named Cyril. Among the many fanatics which Christianity had produced must be named the monks and nuns who over ran Egypt at this period.

“Alexandria was full of them, and their dark superstitions made them at all times ready for the commission of the worst crimes. Hypatia’s learning had roused the hatred and bigotry of Cyril, and by his instructions a mob of howling monks waylaid her.’

“On a fatal day, in the holy season of Lent, Hypatia was torn from her chariot, stripped naked, dragged to

the church, and inhumanly butchered by the hands of Peter the reader, and a troop of savage and merciless fanatics; her flesh was scraped from her bones with sharp oyster shells and the quivering limbs were delivered to the flames."

It is not my intention to inflame your minds with recitals from these dark pages of history—which would require volumes—I only wish to give you the merest outline necessary to a partial understanding of what the Mother Church stands for, of what she has done and still would do were it not for the forces that oppose her.

I believe there is a "Divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will"; but the process may lead us through sunless caverns of ignorance and nights of darkness spanning ages. It is not according to the decree of destiny that such a hydra-headed monster should usurp the power of the whole world and retain it forever. She became so bloated by lust and greed that all pretense to spirituality had neither form nor substance; their chief occupation was absolving sins or granting indulgences, for revenue. Her persecutions might or might not always prove remunerative; the former was always profitable.

The beginning of the end came with what is known as "the Reformation," a great Ecclesiastical movement which took place in the sixteenth century. The chief actor in this reform movement was Martin Luther. It will be necessary to quote briefly from the International Encyclopedia (see Martin Luther).

"The idea that it was in the power of the church to forgive sin had gradually grown into the notion which

was widely spread, that the pope could issue pardons of his own free will, which being dispensed to the faithful, exonerated them from the consequences of their transgressions.

“The sale of these pardons had become an organized part of the papal system. Money was largely needed at Rome, to feed the great expenses of the papal court; and its numerous emissaries sought everywhere to raise funds by the sale of ‘indulgences’ as they were called for the sins of frail humanity: the principal of these was John Tetzel, a Dominican friar who had established himself at Juterbach, on the border of Saxony. Luther’s indignation at the shameless traffic which this man carried on, finally became irrepressible: God willing he exclaimed: ‘I will beat a hole in his drum.’ He drew out ninety-five theses on the doctrine of indulgences, which he nailed upon the gate of the church at Wittenberg, and which he offered to maintain in the university against all impugners. The general purport of these theses was to deny to the pope all right to forgive sins. If the sinner was truly contrite, he received complete forgiveness. ‘The pope’s absolution had no value in and for itself.’”

This quotation will answer for a text. The “Reformation” has been of great value to the world; it was bound to come. Now let us make an examination as free from prejudice as our frail and limited minds will enable us, and see just how and in what way we have been benefited. It has given us what is known as the Protestant churches or creeds. Why they are called Protestant is from the fact that they protested or rebelled against the papal or Mother Church as it is

now called. This puts a fence between them and the papal Bull, and we have no doubt he was formidable to those to whom he could be set against, so here is one point gained, to those who are outside of papal influence. Then 'tis said there are over one hundred different creeds born from her prolific womb (the Mother Church) and this gives that number more of different ways of reaching heaven. And this by many may be considered another great point gained. Again through the controversies, crusades, cataclysms, and upheavals wrought through this reformation, gave to the world the Bible, this "word of God," so that each individual can sit in council and draw his own conclusions.

And here is another which I consider the great point gained through the Reformation. We now have this Bible printed in all the different languages throughout all Christendom for all to read, which the Mother Church fought strenuously against and why? Because she knew its contents, and she knew where and how the New Testament originated; she knew it would not stand the test of reason, or bear up under the searchlight of truth: and well she knew when in time it was to be analyzed by later day intelligence the fraud would be liable or sure to be laid bare: and "unto this day" she enjoins her followers to leave the study of the "Holy Scriptures" with the "Holy Fathers" because they only are endued with wisdom from on high to give the correct interpretation to the lambs of the flock; therefore while the lambs may not be strictly forbidden reading the "Word" they are acknowledged by the Papal See as unprofitable and harmful.

The lamp of learning, which was so nearly extin-

guished through this dark and priestly reign of terror, was again restored to the world: And here let me ask, is it to this we owe our present civilization and all it stands for—is it to the Christian religion? Here is another superlatively great point gained, the restoration of learning.

“Now let us reason together.” God is said to have said this to David, if I mistake not. I know God makes use of this expression somewhere in the Book according to his word; I cannot just now recall where, but it shows this God has at one time at least asked man to use his reason. Now let us see what changes in belief and practice were wrought through the Reformation, brought about by Martin Luther and his co-laborers: what changes in religious thought that would tend to make mankind happier and give him greater assurance of heaven or a future life? Our Protestant Bible as we have it now is considerably reduced in size from the Roman; while the Protestant has but sixty-six books, the Roman Catholic has eighty. This I look upon as being advantageous to Protestants; they have a smaller scope to search over for hidden treasure.

CHAPTER VII

But to our subject. Is or was the Mother Church all wrong, and are the Protestant churches all right? We have *prima facie* evidence that they are not all right, or there could not be so many of them. It is evident there must be error with all but one, so the rational presumption is there is error with them all.

The truth is, the orthodox changes wrought through the Reformation amount to this: it is a case where one error is replaced by another. The mediatorial power of absolving sin is wrested from the Pope and bestowed to Christ absolutely, and through him alone can sins be remitted. Now I have spoken of this error before, but as I again come against it, will give an illustration in regard to its justice. You may call this commonplace and old, but it embodies a principle that cannot well grow old: it is broad in its application and can be applied to an infinite number of cases.

For example: Here are two men; neither of them make any pretension to any religion, both of them what the preacher would call in an unsaved condition; the things of this world are their only thought or care. No. 1 sees how he can be greatly benefited by putting No. 2 out of the way. They both may have heard the story of the thief on the cross or salvation at the eleventh hour, and "Though your sins are as scarlet, Christ's blood will wash them white as snow." No. 1 may have even considered how his crime would or could be expiated by this plan of repentance and a contrite heart, after the deed was done: he has laid his plans to escape the civil law. The deed is done. No. 1 murders No. 2; but his plan of escape did not work as he expected, he is hunted down, proven guilty, and the sentence of death is passed upon him; the day of execution is fixed; no earthly hope, but he is furnished spiritual council and advice, the word of God is unfolded to him, there are many prayers sent heavenward for him, he is converted, and upon execution receives a free passport to heaven, while No. 2 has his

portion "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." Now, does this not look as though there were a mistake somewhere? Is it a little thing, when one looks backward o'er the past and contemplates the dark deeds committed in the name of Israel's God; when he comes into a knowledge of a truth that will free mankind from this nightmare of delusion; is it a little thing that he try to arrest the attention of the deluded throng by trying to give them something better?

Oh! you say the world is overrun with religious fanatics who are trying to deceive even the "very elect; my faith is nailed to the Cross of Christ, and I do not want any of your new plans, or new religions."

I have only this to offer in reply: I have nothing new to give you; what I have is very ancient, it is found in the Bible, the Bible proves it in both the Old Testament and the New.

It is nothing to be accepted by faith; it is knowledge born of truth and will endure. God's word is Truth. Wisdom and truth are synonymous. Truth is truth and will endure. Would we make a mistake in making life's voyage, whether it be protracted or brief, and whether storms threaten and you are tempest-tossed, or whether your voyage is propitious and you are smiled upon by Dame Fortune and your bark court favoring tide and wind, to believe

"That right is right since God is God,
 That right the day will win;
 To doubt would be disloyalty,
 To falter would be sin"?

And should we not ever be willing

“To accept the Truth wherever found,
On Christian or on heathen ground”?

Now, am I a misanthrope, and are all my intentions in connection with what I am writing only meant for evil? I certainly do not wish to be understood that way. I deplore the situation the world is in to-day, religiously, socially, and financially. It is the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man that I would be pleased to have replace the present conditions. And this I believe can only be brought about by an unfolding of the truth. I think when this is better understood we will have a better reign of Righteousness than we have yet known. There have been dreams of a “Millennium.” I think when the truth is better understood and taught this much talked of and longed for time will begin its dawn.

When the first government was instituted of which we have any record—that of the Israelites, with their God as tutelar, and he in such close proximity that every detail of affairs within the camp was under his direct observation and supervision, and if any of “the chosen” went whoring after other gods, they must be stoned to death with stones outside the camp. God seemed to believe in rigid economy; this was not an expensive way of removing evil-doers.

When the papal church came into being and established her dynasty, with the “Prince of Peace” as tutelar, the ingenuity of man was taxed and there was a premium to those who could invent the machine that

would inflict the most pain without immediately assailing the vital organs. The cross, the thumb-screw, the torch and fagot, the stake, infernal machines stretching the body and breaking the joints, and, if not killed, left maimed and crippled as living examples for ungodly behavior.

Time has wrought its changes; the implements of inquisitorial torture to avenge God have had their day. Has the world been converted to Christianity by these, either has it been by the sweet influence of the Protestant preacher? No, nor never will be. The truth is, modern thought has produced such an undercurrent that the Christian religion is steadily and surely losing ground and her hold upon the people; this is apparent to both friend and foe.

Can we ever duly appreciate what has been done for mankind by those who have not believed?

The Christian churches, Mother Church and all, have been bereft of the power to torture or slay dissenters; they can only anathematize to this hell of their own creation, or they may content themselves with ostracism, excommunication or interdiction to such as may teach that which is inimical to their creeds.

This is what I may expect in full measure.

Possibly some of the readers may be curious to know who is writing this, and while I am telling of so much I do not believe, whether the time is coming when I may tell of what I do believe.

I expect to tell you of what I believe, but that properly falls in Part II. of my work.

I was born in the town of Colchester, Delaware

County, State of New York., A. D. 1848. There were seven children of us: two sisters older than I, and I the eldest brother, three brothers younger. Have for the most part of my life resided in the town in which I was born and where I still reside. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, I was in my thirteenth year. In the fall of 1864 I had just reached my sixteenth milestone. I enlisted with my father and went with him to the war. As the war closed in the summer of '65, we both returned home in good health and resumed our former occupation—lumbering. Previous to this, in the winter of 1859 diphtheria broke out in our school district; these were the first cases of this dread disease in this part of the country, and the doctors did not even know what to name it. It was very malignant, and up to the time I went to the war our school was terribly decimated, and I, with my understanding of the meaning of death at that time from what I had been taught, wrapped my life at this time in deep gloom; this, together with religious revivals which were going the rounds at that time, and the manner in which they were conducted—God's wrath was dwelt upon much more then than now—made impressions upon my mind that time has never effaced and without doubt lends an influence at this time which prompts me to write.

My educational advantages were not of the best; I went to school but little after I was thirteen years old. I attended our district school the winter following my return from the war about six weeks, and the next winter about the same, but by applying my mind to books as best I could, and by getting help wherever it was

available, I obtained a license to teach the fall I was nineteen years old and taught a district school that winter. I worked diligently at my books, and my examinations averaged fair and I taught several winter terms; but competition was sharp, and this grade of teachers outnumbered the schools, and I learned then what has many times since been forced upon my mind: that we seem to be many times badly in each other's way. So I concluded to give up this field of labor and turn my attention to carpenter-work, and this I found to be about the same—we were in each other's way, and this, I observe, holds good in all the walks of life, in religion and politics as well, we seem to be in each other's way. This is called competition, and competition does not seem to foster brotherly love. Where is the remedy? In the summer of 1871 I married Gertrude S. Platner; our first birthdays both fell in the same year; she had also taught school; we were both poor, but were hopeful of the future. There were four children born to us, three boys and one girl, our youngest: she was never very strong, and died at the age of twenty-one.—I expect to speak again of her by and by in Part II.—Our boys are all living. We united with the M. E. Church a short time after our marriage. I then thought it a duty enjoined upon me to study the Scripture; it is always advised by the parson—if not by the priest—as profitable, and as I had acquired a habit of trying to probe well into whatever subject with which I engaged, thought I must not deal in superficialities on so momentous a subject as this, the word of God. Of course I had read the Bible before this, but, as the young are likely to, without giving

it much thought, supposing that the mysteries of Godliness were inscrutable and we must simply believe. I never took very great interest in reading one's biography, so wish to make this as brief as consistent to the understanding of the reader. The more I read the Bible the more I doubted, and doubt is not belief, nor is it any vehicle upon which to reach heaven, according to this Holy Book, and its expounders. I had a great desire during my early life to study medicine, and in the year of '76 thought possibly my finances might warrant the undertaking, so I commenced work. My preceptors, the town doctors, spoke in high terms of my progress, but there were breakers ahead. I had a certain amount of money tied up in a farm on a second mortgage, and I had to take this farm or lose the money; so, after studying medicine for the most part of a year, but not steady, was obliged to abandon this project altogether and attend to farming.

At this time there was what is known in American history as the "resumption act," the resumption of specie payment: and our country during this time waded through one of her greatest financial struggles recorded in our history, and the times were very hard and financial failures reached a stage that was appalling: but my wife and I struggled along with the hope that we would find it better farther on. I replaced the old worthless buildings with new ones, purchased more land, so that this is now a fair dairy farm for our rough and broken country.

I sold this farm about four years ago, built a house in a hamlet called Downsville, about three miles distant from this farm, in which my wife and I now live.

Time rolls his ceaseless course, and has borne us on to our sixtieth mile post, but we are both still in fair health, with bright hopes still of the future, our hopes now stretch away o'er the undulating vale of time till they span the mystic river.

With this brief introduction we will now proceed with our book. I have never been a favorite of fortune in the affairs of this world, in regard to favor or preferment. The most fortunate tide in my affairs of life was that my time just reached the period of the Civil War which seemed most opportunely, and for that service I receive a small pension of eight dollars per month, this with a small rental from a part of my house and a small amount from this farm, enables me to do this literary work which without this pension I do not see how I could.

What I spoke of a few lines back, how we seem to be in each other's way, and the subterfuges resorted to, to crowd each other down and out, the commercial warfare that is continually waged and the same in politics and in religion, the perfect *sangfroid* with which one Christian can do his brother without apparent remorse: this with a thousand and one things, many which I expect to name has led me from the Christian religion, and what were at first doubts have since culminated into convictions that the Bible and the creeds founded thereon were error.

This was my tacit belief for a term of years, from which I derived no comfort, and when in conversation I would hear doubts or disbelief expressed in regard to the Christian faith, I would ask do you know of something better to take its place? implying that if

they did not, it would behoove them to keep still; and this was the charge I had against Ingersoll, Paine, Voltaire, and all who wrote against the Christian Bible and Religion, that it hardly looked warrantable unless they knew of something better to offer, because I thought Christianity with all its inconsistencies was better than the force arrayed against it as I then understood things, and thought the tendency was to wantonly destroy the comfort of millions, and no thought of trying to offer anything to placate the loss.

What has changed my mind not only from speaking but to put my thoughts in book form and give them to the world, abnegating the foundation of the Christian's faith, the Bible, as a revelation from God? In the latter part of the summer of 1900 by a concurrence of circumstances which are not important only as it resulted in bringing me up against the subject of Spiritualism, in a more tangible manner than ever before, and I learned for the first time in my life that there was a paper published in the U. S. A. that stood as an exponent for Spiritualism, or that there had ever been a book published upon this subject.

Now to Spiritualists this may look strange indeed; but 'tis true and I have no doubt but the number would reach into millions at the present time who are kept ignorant of this truth by making them believe that the Old, Old, Story, is all that has ever been given or ever may be, upon which to attach a faith.

So here you have it I am a firm believer in Spiritualism. I do not call myself a Spiritualist, but I am satisfied that the phenomena of Spiritualism is a fact and that the philosophy is indeed rational. So we will

for the time let all that attaches to this subject rest until we arrive at part two of this work.

I have come to believe, dear friends, that when this knowledge comes to be generally understood that we will not be so in each other's way; that we will have a much better world to live in then than now; that war and strife and speculation will diminish as this knowledge increases because we will have a foundation based on truth, and we will find ourselves in touch with the Spirit world and they will teach us the better way. That State prisons and machines for killing criminals will not be so much needed, for crime will diminish in proportion as this glorious knowledge grows. Is not this a consummation devoutly to be wished! Who beholding the present situation of this sad world would not lend a helping hand to bring about this change?

It would be more agreeable to me to drop this Bible question, and enter at once upon this subject that I have reserved for the latter part of my work, but I feel that it would then be incomplete, and I would not wish to submit a matter of such momentous importance to the public in a halfway manner. So now that we have broken the ground, and I have defined my position, so I hope that I may not be misunderstood, we will proceed with our examination of the Scripture. What we find of value we will carefully label for future use; while the great bulk we will be happy indeed to repudiate, for it can in no way—as I shall expect to show—contribute to our enjoyment in this world or the next.

Am I seeking to destroy the comfort of millions? Here is a newspaper clipping which I think answers this

question quite satisfactorily: "Why should we seek to destroy the comfort that millions of tired and perplexed souls to-day find in what they understand to be the promises of God?" The words credited to Jesus (John v. 30.) "*Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life,*" crowd themselves on our attention until we opened to Deut. xx. 10-16, inclusive, and read: "*When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make the answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee and they shall serve thee.*" (that is, shall be their slaves.) "*And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: And when the Lord thy God hath delivered it unto thy hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword: But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee. Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations. But of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth.*"

"It would be very wrong to destroy the comfort that millions of tired and perplexed souls, who derive from these blessed words of the Lord our God who delighteth to slaughter and feast on others' toil. Several readings, to impress every feature of these inspired words on the mind should be made. And note good

reader, that holy book inerrant in every feature, translated into near three hundred different languages, and scattered broadcast among all peoples for their guidance, contains not only these blessed words quoted, but scores of similar passages follow, each concluding:

“So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and the South and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel commanded.

“No, no, such valuable words of comfort should not be withheld from the Christian world. And the book containing such noble sentiments should have a place as a textbook in our public schools, and a copy should be placed in the hands of every little heathen and dirty little infidel as well showing the loving character of the Lord our God.”

Let us see! Was it not this God, so generous to his friends so cruel to the invaded cities, the inhabitants of which for declining to submit, and become the slaves of the aggressors, did he not repent that he had made man, and was he not grieved to his heart on account of his defective job, and was it not he who overwhelmed all in a common ruin, saving only a favored few to people the world again? It must have been a real “comfort” to those people to be thus destroyed, as there is a pleasure in directing attention to the affair. “Paul caught the spirit of these events when he declared, Great is the mystery of Godliness.” What think ye?

CHAPTER VIII

Now we will commence our salient review at the beginning, with what is known as the "Pentateuch" the first five books of the Bible ascribed to Moses. Now I will postulate that these books are fiction, and this great and mighty man Moses is a myth.

Now if I succeed in discovering to you internal evidence sufficient to remove all reasonable doubt in regard to this proposition; it looks as though this great Bible problem might be quite easy of solution. Because if mankind has not been lost through the disobedience of this first pair, the first member of the equation is eliminated, and that makes the other member perfectly apparent.

We will now take the first three chapters, and give them a cursory survey. Here is contained in these three chapters the whole cosmogony with two accounts of man's creation. Now we will consider the first verse of this Book. "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*" Now I have heard the Theologian dilate upon the Godlike wisdom contained in this sentence, for its transcendental evasiveness: that it required infinite wisdom to commence this eternal word with such an elastic expression. To dilate upon all this paltry stuff accredited to God would make my book larger than the Bible itself and this I must guard against.

Somebody with God-given vision has placed this creation at 4004 years before Christ. It must have been God-given or he would not have drawn the line

so fine as to the matter of four years, they would have expressed the time in round numbers. Now I do not believe there is a theologian of the present day that has been through the mill, that will say that he believes this biblical account of creation, and yet they will stand in the pulpit and proclaim the Bible in its entirety to be the infallible word of God.

Just a few evenings since there was what they call a prayer service at the M. E. church at our place where several ministers of the same cloth meet and have a longer and stronger pull than usual. Well I attended these most of the time, perhaps for the same reason that Satan did when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord (spoken of in Job) Satan came also, and that is what I did. I went purposely to hear them discourse and this is what I heard one of them say: "That he did not know whether this story of Eden was so or not nor did he care; he seemed to hold that it was so far-fetched that it was probably legendary; but the all important thing was to get on the anxious seat, give your heart to God get converted and be saved." I thought to myself, do you consider what you are saying? Here he would ignore or speak in such deprecating terms of the very foundation upon which the whole plan of their religion rests, because if this is not true the whole plan tumbles. If mankind was not lost through this transgression, the ministers have lost their hold upon humanity, because if we were not lost through Adam, we are under no obligations to Christ for salvation, through your assistance. Therefore, your help is not needed.

Now I must reiterate this because if this little silly

legend fails its purpose, which science, reason, common sense and everything points to the contrary: yet the whole scheme, law, prophets, mediator, all of this tremendous world-work, synagogues, cathedrals, churches, temples, theological seminaries, missionaries to convert the heathen, priests, preachers and much more, all hinges upon this simple antiquated story, of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and this marvelously endowed snake.

We must of necessity skip the genealogy of the early patriarchs since they do not choose to enlighten us in regard to their diet or rules of living, whereby they attained to such great longevity approximating a thousand years, but will turn our attention to a matter more pertinent to the case; the God question; found in Gen. vi., commencing with the chapter, it reads: "*And it came to pass when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them: That the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he is also flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.*"

"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."

Here is something upon which the mind must need to linger. "Great are the mysteries of Godliness," but mystery fails here, because mystery is swallowed up in mystery. How many Gods are there we would ask,

that lay claim to this Bible? Now since the God question with which we are or should be concerned, we will refer back to (Gen. iii. 22.) "*And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever.*"

Now the question of Evolution, while it may be very interesting as a matter for speculation, but it is not the all important question; because we know that we are here, just how we came to be, we might be glad to know, if we were satisfied as to the correctness of the account. But what in the future, what after death, is a matter that should interest us all. And this Scripture the commencement of the Bible is of the utmost importance to the Truth Seeker.

And the question is, Who was God talking to at this time, as he was brooding over his mistake? and was reflecting on what farther calamities might befall if there were no interposition? Was he communing with himself, soliloquizing! The language of the Scripture does not justify this conclusion.

Was he talking to Gods of his own plane of equality and power? Was he talking to his lecherous sons who were implicated in the production of this race of hybrid giants who were productive of so much wickedness that it "repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth and it grieved him at his heart?" Was he talking to his only begotten Son who was slain upon Calvary to atone for this calamity, which had just been precipitated. Who was God talking to? It would hardly seem likely that he was talking to those little Gods that he was so jealous of, the gods of the Philistines,

the Jebusites and the gods of all the nations that he set his mind to exterminate, when he discovered those redeeming qualities of Father Abraham.

This is a question dear reader upon which the theologian is silent. But it is very common to hear from the pulpit reference to the true and living God, which tacitly implies that there are a great many dead ones. This we all firmly believe, and this I think will aid us in our studies, that as knowledge increases Gods die; and who knows that Israel's God is still alive? We know he is not doing business at the old stand, as in the days of Joshua, and I for one entertain no doubt, but this God is doomed to pass into oblivion with the other tribal gods he was so jealous of in their day.

In making this review of this Pentateuch there are three things which I consider fundamental or paramount:

First—That which reveals the character of Israel's God.

Second—That the Pentateuch is fiction and was fabricated many centuries later than the time ascribed to it.

Third—The rational proof that there were excarnate intelligences or entities known of at the time this Pentateuch was written, whenever that may have been. The latter I consider of greatest importance.

Therefore what I may say upon this part of the Bible will be along one or the other of these lines.

Now we will consider for a brief space the probabilities of Noah's flood. Within the last forty or fifty years this old legend has been steadily losing ground. I doubt if there are but very few among the ministry

to-day if you took them behind the curtain and asked them frankly if they believed this story as recorded in (Gen. vi. vii. viii.) about this deluge, they might try to dodge the issue to some extent but they would tell you that they did not really believe it in a literal sense; that it was allegorical and designed to—teach—now what can possibly attach to such a story as this either literally or allegorically, what useful lesson can be drawn, that places a God in such a light as does this history of this flood. According to the chronology this flood occurred sixteen hundred years after the creation of the first pair. But with the duration of life reaching to near a thousand years, and the conception of the females having been greatly multiplied in consequence of the curse, and God's sons taking such as they chose for wives, would give by this time a goodly population, upon whom God could wreak vengeance.

Now we will take a look at a few of the salient features relative to this story to show what a bungler this Bible writer was; consider the dimensions of this strange craft, four hundred and seventy-five feet long, about eighty feet wide, and forty-eight feet high, from keel to deck; this was certainly a tremendous hulk to go floating about with neither sail nor rudder: but the believer may say the highest mountains were all inundated fifteen cubits upward, so she could not run aground, and as she had the high seas all to herself there was no danger of collision. But consider the amount of water this would require. Mt. Everest, a peak of the Himalaya range in Asia, exceeds 29,000 feet high, compute the amount that needs have fell in

those forty days and forty nights, 29,000 feet means over five and one half miles, this depth of water spread over the face of the whole earth; consider the situation, this must have floated admiral Noah high above the limit of perpetual frost, where it would have been exceedingly cold, and with his animals from the torrid zone, and his animals from the frigid zone, herbivaries and carnivories in fine the whole zoo. Noah and his family included with no means of ventilation except this one window, and that but twenty inches square; just for a moment consider the condition that the atmosphere would have been at, with this vast menagerie, with no sanitary provisions for cleaning from these animals except through this named window, forty-eight feet from the keel floor, and no other means of ventilation. One hundred and fifty days with this ark floating at the high water mark, and how much longer they were shut in is not just clear. Is it any wonder after Noah got released from this responsibility, that he should conclude to take a little toddy and have a little debauch? And this is what he did according to the account.

To dilate upon the absurdities contained in this legend which the world is fast outgrowing would require much time and space which I think can be more profitably spent elsewhere.

Such an aggregation of life shut in such a place as is here described could live but a few hours. Consider the condition things would be in, the second day, then the length of time between their entrance and exit. As Lord Byron says, "This was a curious crew as well as cargo."

Is there anything that looks as though the world was made better by this terrible destruction. The first thing Noah does when he went forth from the ark, see (Gen. vii. 20.) "*And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.*" Now at one time 'tis stated that these all came in by two's, so if Noah went to killing them even by one's it would mean extermination, so this must be doctored to make it fit and have the clean beasts and fowls come by sevens, whether 'tis seven males and seven females is left to our conjecture.

I speak of this deluge to show the taste of the narrator, and his conceptions of God. Just see what a finite, little minded, repentant, remorseful, changeable, childlike God this God of Israel is made out to be.

He smells Noah's roasted meat and this seems to rouse him to a realization of what he has done.

He comes down with a contrite heart and repents him of what he has done, and makes some magnanimous promises over which he has no control. But the narrator evinces some sagacity in the selection of these promises. God promised what had been from the earliest traditions, "the changes of the seasons produced by the earth's revolutions, of these this God knew no more about than did Noah."

These promises of this God is looked upon by some as proof conclusive, that this God did really and truly create the world and the whole stellar universe.

But just consider upon what paltry premises you predicate this conclusion. Now here it is: Noah roasted some meat, God smelt the odor arising from this meat

and promises Noah that the change of the seasons shall continue.

Is this any proof that this was anything but a man-made God? Suppose I or any other man should promise the same thing, it would come just the same whether we did or not, and that is all it would amount to, and just the same with Moses' God that made these promises to Noah, in regard to the seasons of seedtime and harvest, and the rainbow.

There is an unfortunate incident connected with Noah's debauch, wherein he cursed, Ham one of his three sons, and his posterity to the end of time. But accidents will happen in the best of families.

All who derive comfort and joy in the belief that this flood took place as recorded, please raise your right hand. I am happy to say I see no hands raised.

We will now turn our attention for a brief space to a matter recorded in (Gen. xi.) to what is known as the dispersion or confusion of tongues. Now if this flood were a fact this history might be a natural sequence of this flood, and God confounding their conditions. When these primitive tribes discovered other tribes that spoke a different language this simple legend has originated and comes down to us that the different languages extant upon the earth is in consequence of this flood, and God confounding their tongues while they were engaged on this tower. But observe the people are still living to the good old age of six or seven hundred years, when God promises in (Gen. vi.) that his days shall be but one hundred and twenty years. My object principally in speaking of this dispersion, is to call your attention to this plain

Scriptural contradiction right before your face, with your open Bible without your needing to turn a leaf. See (Gen. x. 5.) "*By these were the isles of the gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.*" Then look on the opposite page and read Gen. xi. 1. "*And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.*" Observe these two quotations and see if there is not more confusion than the confusion of tongues here referred to. If this were not pure fabrication the word "gentile" could not appear at this age and place. This occurs but two years after Noah left the ark according to the marginal chronology, and the word "gentile" had not been coined, nor could there be any occasion for its use until after the Jewish Priesthood had been established, and this was not until after the Exodus from Egypt, Thereafter according to this history mankind were divided into two prime classes, Jews or Israelites and Gentiles. Readers think of these things.

Now we will turn to Genesis xii. Now it will be necessary to call your attention to some certain things, which perhaps most of you may know, but some do not seem to realize; 'tis this, that the headings of the chapters is no part of the Canon, and these headings are often very misleading, and also the italicized words pervading the whole Book are interpolations; sometimes they do not particularly affect the original, and then again they produce a material change. Now this chapter is important because here the Christian discovers what purports to be the first specific promise of Christ, and the first Patriarch is chosen whose genealogy is traced down through all of this turmoil of war and

devastation, the rise and fall of kingdoms decreed of God and those that God did not decree to Christ. Now unfortunately this promise of Christ is embodied in the heading of this chapter, and not in the chapter itself, and one individual has as much right as another to study and draw conclusions from this chapter and see for himself if Christ is really and truly promised.

Now as this is the first great Patriarch whose lineage is traced to Christ, and one to whom so much attaches of vital importance to the Christian's claim, we must go slow and examine with care. You will see Abram first mentioned in Genesis xi. 26. "*And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor and Haran.*" In verse twenty-nine of this same chapter he is married to his half sister at least so he says.

Here are the three first verses of Genesis xii. 1-3, where Abram is chosen of the Lord: "*Now the Lord said unto Abram. Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*" We are at a loss to know in just what manner God did his communicating at this age of the world; but let us make a brief analysis of this communication, that we may make ourselves acquainted with this "God of Israel."

Abram is to get out of his country and away from his kindred; perhaps the theologian might point out the wisdom there is in this, but it is beyond me.

But here is the part that impinges upon my mentality, and exerts a powerful influence toward placing this god on the level of manmade gods, that has wrought great mischief in our world, is this, "*I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee.*"

No conditions enjoined in regard to behavior on the part of Abram; he could go it irresponsible, he could encroach upon whomsoever he chose, and if a frown of resentment was offered, God's curse was upon him.

What kind of a civilization would be likely to be built up, under such a Godship as this. God interfering with all the trifling details of life. Choosing one man out of this population that had but so recently sprung up, the posterity of righteous Noah (428 years after the flood) to whom he made such handsome promises when he smelt his burnt offering? And here again so soon we find him with his love all concentrated on just one and this is Abram, all the rest of Noah's descendants are left out in the cold. And what might tend to still further elate Abram, see Gen. xii. 6-7. "*And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.*"

We will briefly sketch the career of this first and wonderful patriarch to whom this wonderful promise of a Redeemer is made, and see as the saying goes if it will hold water.

In verse ten of this same chapter 'tis recorded, "*And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there;*" a matter of about two hundred miles to get clear of this famine. He on approaching the coast of Egypt instructs his wife to introduce herself as his sister on account of her beauty, he reasons that this would endanger his life were she to be known as his wife. Well true enough her beauty creates a furore, and she is made an addition to Pharaoh's harem. Abram is entreated well for having such a sweet sister, and is made handsome presents, consisting of sheep, oxen and asses, men-servants and maid-servants; but God plagues Pharaoh and his house with great plagues for this behavior.

Pharaoh calls up Abram, administers a severe reprimand for this falsehood and deception, serves a writ of ejectment, and commands his men concerning Abram and his wife and all that he has.

Just note the difference here between Abram this righteous and renowned patriarch and Pharaoh the common sinner.

CHAPTER IX

Well Abram gathers up his stuff, which makes him "very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold, and gets himself and all of his effects back into the land of Canaan. It does not seem in this case, as well as many other cases recorded in the Book to be but a small task to pass from Canaan to Egypt. Abram is almost immediately back into the land of Canaan and is having some contention with his nephew Lot, or at least their herdsmen

are, owing to their being crowded in consequence of their having so much cattle. Well this difficulty was amicably settled Abram gives Lot his choice of territory be it either to the right or left, Abram would take the opposite direction or side. See Gen. xiii. 12. "*Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.*" I speak of Lot because he figures in an important matter as you will see a little later. After this separation from Lot, God again communes with Abram. See Gen. xiii. 14, "*And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward. For all the land which thou seest to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.*"

Then God tells Abram to walk the length and breadth of this land, that he may realize its immensity.

Now were not these extravagant promises? Abram's seed are to occupy this vast domain forever, and numerically they were to equal the dust of the earth.

This territory that God promises, you will find, if you look it up on the map and make a computation from the scale of English miles, not to exceed fifty miles in breadth and to be about two hundred miles in length: About one fifth the area of New York State. Was not this a broad-minded God?

Here you see is foreshadowed those awful times recorded in Joshua.

We will now turn to the next chapter Gen. xiv. In

this chapter is proof unmistakable that this portion of the Bible is fiction and anonymous and is without authority. This chapter contains an account of battles as the heading says of four kings against five. This is nothing to the case only as it relates to the capture and abduction of Lot, Abram's nephew, recorded in verses 12-14, "*And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed. And there came one that had escaped and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eschel, and brother of Aner: And these were confederate with Abram. And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.*"

Now observe carefully, Abram the Hebrew pursued them unto Dan. In this sentence, "Abram the Hebrew pursued them unto Dan," are two proofs positive that this Pentateuch is a fabrication pure and simple. Abram as is represented in this history is the patriarch from whom the Hebrews sprung, and the word Hebrew had not been coined as there was nothing to apply the name to at this time, and, "unto Dan." Now it should be remembered that the third and last of this line of patriarchs was Jacob whom God renamed Israel, he was more fruitful than his precedents, Abram and Isaac, and became the father of twelve sons, it is not necessary here to name them all, but the name of one was Dan, and this was the name of one of the tribes of Israel, named from Dan their father. Now turn to Judges xviii. 27-29, "*And they took the things which Micah, and the priest which he had, and came unto*

Laish, unto a people that were at quiet and secure: and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire. And there was no deliverer, because it was far from Zidon, and they had no business with any man; and it was in the valley that lieth by Beth-rehob. And they built a city and dwelt therein. And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father: howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first."

Biblical Chronology shows that the city of Dan had no existence until five hundred and seven years after this story is told, "how Abram pursued them unto Dan." How is this for an inerrant Bible? Still we will continue touching upon the salient points of Abram's history. In Gen. xv, Abram bewails the fact that his only heir is one by a concubine. God promises him a son by his wife Sarai, and that his seed shall outnumber the stars of heaven. In verse thirteen is foreshadowed Israel's bondage in Egypt for four hundred years.

Gen. xvi., is interesting reading, but as it is not strictly pertinent to the case in point we will pass it by; it contains the strange account of Abram and Sarai his wife; their treatment of poor Hagar, Abram's concubine, after gestation. Is it any wonder according to the laws that govern during this period, that Ishmael should be what God predicted?

Gen. xvii., brings this patriarch to his ninety-ninth year. God again renews his promise with augmentation. He is to be the father of many nations: his name is changed for some wise reason not understood by mortals, to Abraham. God promises to make him ex-

ceedingly fruitful, "*that nations and kings shall come out of him.*" Verse seven, "*And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for our everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee.*"

Now after God has made all of these extravagant promises, he then makes known the conditions upon which they are to be fulfilled. See verse ten, "*This is my covenant which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.*" 11—" *And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.*" 12—" *And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations; he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.*" 14—" *And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.*"

How does this appeal to your mentality for Godliness? To what class of gods does this God belong, think you? Is this the God of law and order that created and is still governing the universe? The God by whose will the planets move in their respective orbits, and whose will is law concerning things celestial and things terrestrial whose all pervading power governs the mote as well as the star of greatest magnitude? Is this the God who rules the whole realm of space and whose tenure is eternity? And yet, here would condescend to instruct Abraham and his seed forever, and make it binding upon them if they expect him to be their God,

that they must mutilate themselves in this most disgusting manner, not only themselves, but their slaves that they may buy with money.

Talk of blasphemy! I do not know in what way I could blaspheme, or slander the Infinite, worse, than to say that I believed this diabolical, black, indamnable, stuff that has been accredited by ignorance and superstition to the Almighty. These old traditions and relics of savagery are not so much to be wondered at, understanding the world as we do to-day, the rise and progress of the human race, and the ignorance in which the dark past is enshrouded; but here at this Twentieth Century to hear the educated minister proclaim from the pulpit that this Bible is the infallible and inspired word of God leads one to think that mankind has not made such great strides in the march of civilization after all, especially as regards religion.

That circumcision did not originate in this way or at this time, and that it was found to be practiced among certain tribes in the Western Hemisphere, which Israel's God made no pretensions of knowing anything about is manifest to those who may care to look this subject up. (See International Cyclopedia.)

While I am an advocate of religious toleration, and freedom of thought as far as is consistent to law and order, and justice to all; but it does look to me at this age, that reason justifies legislative interference in regard to such a heathenish practice as "circumcision."

But to our subject, Gen. xvii, God promises Abraham a son by his wife Sarah—as God decrees she shall be called hereafter. Abraham expostulates for Ishmael. God makes fair promises for Ishmael and his

descendants, but assures Abraham that Sarah shall bear him a son upon whom all these great promises are to be fulfilled. And God names him Isaac, and he (Isaac) is to make his *debut* at "this set time in the next year." And the holy ordinance of circumcision is performed upon Abraham and his whole household—the male portion.

This brings us to Gen. xviii. And here we are brought up against a new proposition; something not previously mentioned in the Scripture.

Here it is: verses 1-2, "*And the Lord appeared unto him (Abraham) in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him.*"

Now these three men turn out to be "angels" and they are here in pursuance of God's business, in regard to the advent of Isaac, whom Sarah is to bear at the set time, as before mentioned, and also in regard to two cities of the plain, Sodom and Gomorrah, that God concludes to destroy, as a punishment for certain sins committed. Now as we cannot go into details too far, and as it is these angels in whom I am interested, we will confine ourselves to these. Now again in Gen. xix. 1, it reads, "*And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: And Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.*"

Now we will let Abraham rest for a time as I wish to speak of these angels. As I said at the outset that I expected to prove beyond the shadow of a reasonable doubt that this Pentateuch is fiction, which I think I

have already come pretty near doing, but the proof is not all in yet by a long way.

Now the question of these angels falls under the third proposition that I previously named: That the existence of excarnate intelligences are proven by the Scripture; and herein is contained all that is of any real value in the Book: And this I wish to be understood, when coupled with present day knowledge is of great importance. Now in this chapter before mentioned (Gen. xviii.) where these angels appeared unto Abraham as he sat in his tent door; you will observe when their business is made known, and they are talking to this venerable patriarch about the heir that Sarah is to give birth to, Sarah, overhearing the conversation did some laughing behind the door. See verse eighteen, "*And the LORD said unto Abraham, wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?*" Also fourteen, "*Is anything too hard for the LORD?*" Again, in regard to the two angels that appeared unto Lot at the gate of Sodom, you will observe that Lot addresses as Lord in his conversation with them in regard to his making his escape. This is a significant fact that pervades the Old Testament Scripture throughout, that wherever excarnate entities are mentioned the words Angel and God and Lord, are made interchangeable and synonymous. As corroborative evidence to this proposition, I was in conversation a short time since with a Methodist minister, and spoke of the account where Jacob wrestled with God, "and saw him face to face." The minister replied "that this was not God but an angel." Well reader, if this was an angel, the Bible God question

is settled; for this is the only God that figures in this Holy Book, as is perfectly apparent to the intelligent investigator; and that Israel's God is introduced with a capital letter and is often expressed in capitals throughout, while the other tribal gods are always introduced with a little "g" is only a matter of taste with the translators and has no significance whatever.

The rational conclusion, then, is this: That this narrator, whoever he may have been, has at least heard of decarnate intelligences, and has concluded to weave them into his literary effort, just as weavers of fiction do at the present day. The all important question is: Who are these angels spoken of in Holy Writ? We will keep this question in mind, as we move forward, because reader if an angel or decarnate intelligence ever communicated with mortals in the period of Bible making they still do, and if they do communicate with mortals now, we have no reason to doubt but they did then; here is involved all that is of intrinsic worth in the Bible: because I expect to prove from this Book that there was communication between the world of mortals and the world of spirits in those ancient days. This I own would hardly be possible from the Book itself were it not for modern revelation.

The description of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, with this halo of miracle and God's terrible wrath is perhaps founded upon a fact; that there was a seismic disturbance and two primitive cities and their inhabitants were destroyed. This was as likely to have happened then as now and perhaps more so according to geology. Such things in man's primitive day were looked upon as expressions of God's wrath for dis-

obedience, or sins committed. Our world has just had a visitation of this kind in Southern Italy and Sicily Island, where two cities, Regia and Messina, have become cemeteries of their own inhabitants: 150,000 souls 'tis estimated have met the same fate as did those of Sodom and Gomorrah. But there is no such atmosphere of superstition surrounding such sad disasters now as then, in those ancient days, unless mayhap now and then some purblind religious zealot may still declare that this is an expression of God's wrath for these people's sins. A few words in regard to the sad fate of Lot's wife; this has been made the text of many a dismal, horrifying sermon, typifying the terrible sin of taking a stand for Christ and then looking back, or "returning again to the world." There are many people to-day if asked, Do you believe the Bible the infallible word of God? their answer will be, "Most certainly I do"; with a look of surprise for presuming such a question! Then I may ask them, Do you believe this story of Lot's wife, or of Jonah and the whale, or the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, or Joshua staying the sun? Then they will want to turn the conversation. They are ready to swallow the whole Book at one dose, but divide it into small pills and it creates nausea at once.

Here is an "Axiom." If this Bible is a revelation from God, it must be true in every part and parcel, both the Old Testament and the New. This has been and must be the position of the theologian; because the most absurd thing that could be presented to human intelligence, would be a revelation from God mixed up with falsehood. In this case how would we determine

the truth from the error? We are under obligations to believe every word, and that God's wisdom illuminates every miracle and every other part as well, of this Book, or it falls of its own weight into the realm of legend, myth and fable; and like any other ancient literature is valuable only as it corroborates present day knowledge.

Now, what would be a rational conclusion in regard to this story of Lot's wife? Did Lot and his daughters outdistance her in the race for life, and did the sulphurous atmosphere asphyxiate her and she become encrusted with scoria from this volcanic eruption, and thus mummified in this way was pronounced a "pillar of salt"? This does not look altogether irrational but we have no authority for it; it is simply presumption. But that God should inflict so great punishment for so small an offense as looking back upon the destruction of the other members of her household and her home, and all that was near and dear, is another of the mysteries of Godliness, and upon my part is not pleasant to believe. Nor do I. The conduct of righteous Lot and his two daughters, which concludes this nineteenth chapter, is too obscene to discant upon. But I must call your attention to the last two verses. Here we get the origin of two tribes which it is God's will and pleasure to have exterminated by Abraham's seed, as we shall see by and by.

Was this what God in his all-wisdom carefully preserved Lot and his daughters for? See verses 37, 38: "*And the first-born bear a son, and called him Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day.*" "*And the younger, she also bear a son, and called his*

name Ben-ammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon (or Ammonites) unto this day."

Bear in mind, that Lot is the father of these two sons.

I would here call the attention of the reader to this expression, "unto this day." This phrase interlards the Pentateuch throughout, and is made use of after Moses is relieved by death of his responsibility with "Israel." See Deut. xxxiv. 6: "*But no man knoweth of his (Moses') sepulchre unto this day.*" Here is proof conclusive that Moses is innocent of this charge: of being author of this Pentateuch. And there is yet more proof to follow.

CHAPTER X

We will now turn our attention for a little time to Abraham again. Is it not passing strange that, after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, that Abraham should betake himself to wandering again with his wife during her period of gestation, and should play the same old dodge again of calling her his sister; when she was past ninety years of age; and Abimelech, King of Gerar, should become so enamored of her that he should make her an addition to his harem and get himself into worse trouble yet than did Pharaoh by again incurring God's displeasure? But God acts quite humanly; he comes to Abimelech in a dream this time and says, "*Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife.*" You should read this (Gen. xx.) chapter care-

fully, for it is one upon which much attaches: you can draw a comparison between this godly Patriarch and this King of Gerar, the sinner. When God informs him of his mistake, he makes due apology, declaring the integrity of his heart and the innocence of his hands; and that Abraham and his wife had both told him she was his sister: and God comes to the rescue, and Abimelech is saved from committing sin. The point is right here (verse 9): "*Then Abimelech called Abraham and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? Thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done.*" Abraham makes reply, "That he thought the fear of God was not in this place and they would slay him for his wife's sake." Then, to make an apology for the deception, owns up that Sarah is his half-sister, that she is the daughter of his father but not the daughter of his mother.

Then Abimelech repeats the behavior of Pharaoh by making presents of oxen, and sheep, and men-servants and women-servants, and restored him Sarah his wife, and he tells her that he has given Abraham a thousand pieces of silver. See 17, 18: "*So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech and his wife and his maid-servants, and they bare children. For the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.*"

How can anybody possessed of common sense and intelligence teach or preach that stuff like this is a revelation from God?

Now, to prevent this book from assuming wearisome proportions, we must not be too minute in our review.

Does it not look strange indeed to the Bible student that, after the death of Sarah and God's promise was fulfilled in giving him a son upon whom all was to descend that had been foreshadowed, that Abraham should prostitute himself at his time of life with concubines, as is recorded in Gen. xxv.?

We must now, of necessity, let Abraham rest with his fathers.

We now come to the second Patriarch, Isaac; we cannot take up very much time with this Patriarch, as there is nothing particularly relevant to the case in point in regard to his career. We will name a thing or two. It is a mighty strange coincidence that, when there is another famine, Isaac should make his exit with his wife down into Abimelech's kingdom, just as Abraham did, with the same old story that his wife is his sister.

But Abimelech has grown wise by experience with this style of emigrant, and arranges conditions so he can keep an eye on Isaac from a rear window, and discovers him sporting with this sister, or wife—so says the Scripture. Abimelech calls him up, tells him what he has seen, and what a calamity was wrought in his household by his father's falsehoods, and if it had not been for his vigilance there would have been the same disaster repeated.

Then follows the same result—wonderful prosperity to Isaac as a reward for lying.

Now I would call your attention to these three char-

acters, Abraham, Isaac, and Abimelech, for the purpose of seeing which of the three possess the qualities that stand for truest manhood. Abimelech, you will observe, in his conversation with God and with these two acquitted himself very honorably, and seems to have to some degree a sense of morality: while this quality seems to be sadly wanting in the other two. Abimelech, we must remember, is King of the Philistines, and as we will see later on the account of the horrible wars that were waged by Israel to exterminate them, I here wish to call your attention to Gen. xxvi. 26 to 31, that you may see how peaceably inclined Abimelech was, and the effort he made for a treaty of peace which would be enduring between Isaac's household and his kingdom. I will ask you to read this Scripture carefully, as it sheds light upon the subject.

I do not wish to be understood that I entertain a thought that this happened in fact; it is the taste of the narrator and his conceptions of God and the kind of God he has created for us that I would call your attention to, and the advisability of making him the object of dismal worship is the question (?).

Now we will turn our attention for a brief space to the next personage to whom this patriarchal legacy descends (the covenant). It is a patent fact that every one of these Patriarchs are "crooks"; why the narrator should have considered this wise, baffles good judgment; but thus it is, and Jacob, the third and last, outdoes them all. He extorts from his elder brother Esau—the rightful heir—his birthright by apprehending him and taking advantage of his for-

lorn condition when he was starving on the wild: the consideration he receives for said birthright is a mess of pottage. The next subterfuge we find this embryo patriarch engaged in is laying low to beat Esau out of his father's blessing. See Gen. xxviii. This scheme is perpetrated through the wiles of his mother, Rebekah, and with the aid of the kid-skin wrapped around his wrists and neck is a howling success; but for all, the old father seems to have apprehensions that there is something going wrong, and asks (verse 24), "*Art thou my very son Esau?*" Jacob makes answer, "*And he said I am.*" So the old blind father grants his blessing on the wrong son, or, at least, not the one he meant it for. Jacob had scarcely gone from the presence of his father, when Esau comes in with the genuine article (the cooked venison) and speaks affectionately to the old father with great expectation. Consternation and great trepidation now take possession of Isaac, when a full realization of the facts takes the place of apprehension. But Jacob, the third and last Patriarch, has purloined the blessing and is now in possession of both these coveted bestowments. When I was a boy and first heard this story, it was a great wonder to me why, when Isaac discovered this fraud, that he could not recall this blessing and bestow it where he would; and this wonder would still remain, were it not for the fact that the whole thing resolves itself into myth when illuminated by the torch of reason. I mention these incidents in Jacob's life that we may consider the character of these Patriarchs and the nature of this God that has chosen them.

Well, a combination of circumstances which are not

essential to this our work, had now reached a point which makes it necessary for Jacob to take leave of the paternal roof and seek shelter elsewhere. He takes his departure from Beer-sheba and goes toward Haran, and when night overtakes him he takes the stones for his pillow and lays him down to sleep. And he dreams a ladder is set up which reaches from earth to heaven (Gen. xxviii. 12), and the angels of God are ascending and descending upon it. And God stood above this ladder and here renews the promise made to Abraham and Isaac. Jacob in the morning pours oil on this stone pillow, and declares that if "God will be with him and give him bread to eat and raiment to put on, that he will give a tenth of all his substance to God." Does this look like a revelation from the Omnipotent? or does it smack of a man-made god upon which to establish a priesthood that may fatten upon the labor of ignorance? What need has Almighty God of a tenth of what mankind may produce while here on earth, when the earth and the fullness thereof is his? I would ask. Think of these things when you have time.

Jacob here again recalls to mind the existence of angels, which he saw upon this ladder, but this was only a dream. But in Gen. xxxii. 24 to 29 he wrestles with a bona fide angel the whole latter part of a night, when Jacob declares he has seen God face to face. This is where Jacob's name is changed to Israel. The history of Jacob from here on to the close of his life is interesting, but we must forbear, as it is not pertinent to the case in point: The case in point is to prove that the Pentateuch is fiction and has no more

foundation of fact than has "Sinbad the Sailor." Nor does it teach as good a moral.

Now we will turn to Gen. xxxvi. 31 to 43, which contains proof conclusive that the Pentateuch is anonymous and wholly without authority, and was not written until after the reign of Saul, the first King of Israel.

Beginning at verse 31, it reads: "*And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.*"

Now, this verse and on to the end of the chapter or forty-third verse, is copied from the first chapter of the first book of Chronicles, beginning at the forty-third verse. Now give attention to the chapter that precedes this thirty-sixth, or the thirty-fifth, at the beginning of this chapter, which reads: "*And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.*" "*Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be ye clean, and change your garments.*" What a fascination they seemed to have for strange gods, and how little faith they seemed to have in their own, who was doing all these wonders? I call your attention to this last quotation that you may see about the time of life that this is with Jacob. In this chapter God changes his name to Israel. The angel that wrestled with Jacob in a chapter just preceding told him his name was to be Israel, but God does not seem to know this, for he addresses him as Jacob at the beginning of this chap-

ter. This is before all of Jacob's twelve sons are born. It is near the time that Rachel gave birth to Benjamin, and Rachel died in travail, "*and Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day*" (see verse 20). It was before Isaac's death, for this is recorded in the last verse of this chapter.

Then the chapter following the thirty-sixth chapter commences with, "*And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph was seventeen years old.*" Now, if this Pentateuch was written by Moses, it is evident that this account ("*And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel*") could not possibly have a place in Genesis. If it is Moses writing this, what did he know about a king reigning over Israel? Israel never had a king in Moses' time, nor was a king thought of, because Israel's God, according to all that he gave to Moses and Aaron to speak to the children of Israel, was that he (God himself) was going to be their God, King, Dictator, Legislator, and was going to attend to all the affairs of state; for he was too jealous to have Israel entertain a thought of a king usurping his authority during the whole of Moses' career—their exodus from Egypt, and their forty years' wandering in the wilderness, while God was feeding them on quails and manna.

Now, the first king that reigned over Israel was Saul. Saul's reign begins, according to Biblical chronology, 620 years after this time referred to in Gen-

esis, "about a king reigning over Israel." So it is internally evident that this book of Genesis was not written until after Saul's reign, and from the expression in the text, "Before there reigned any king," shows that the crown had descended indefinitely, and that Genesis and the rest of the Pentateuch was probably not written until after the Jewish "captivity," or after Josiah's reign, who was the last king that reigned over the Jews, "or Israel."

It is certain from this data (and there is more to follow):

First—That Abram pursued Lot's abductors unto "Dan."

Second—"That these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel;" that Moses is exonerated from having anything to do with the writing of this part of the Bible, and that the Pentateuch is a myth and Moses a figment.

The greatest difficulty that confronts me is that there is such a vast accumulation of error spanning so many centuries that it is with perplexity that I decide just where to direct my efforts that my work may be most effectual, and keep my book from assuming too great proportions.

So all of the history that brings about what was foreshadowed by God to Abram, that his seed were to be in bondage 400 years before they were to reach this happy land of Canaan, and were to become such a mighty nation, we will not take up the time with: the touchingly beautiful story of Joseph, and his eleven

brothers' conspiracy, which contributes to bring about circumstances which culminate in the fulfillment of God's prediction—this bondage—is truly wonderful, and shows that the narrator, had he lived in modern times, would have given the stars of modern fiction a worried look; but this history we must also pass by.

We will now move ahead until we come down to the first chapter of Exodus.

If Israel's God is really the true and only God, and the Bible is a revelation from him, then is it not our bounden duty to study this revelation that we may become acquainted with the character of God, and that we may make our lives conform to his will and wishes?

Can there be anything objectionable to this proposition? Could the orthodox churchman of any creed object to this? If not, we will proceed with our examination.

Ex. i. 'Tis here stated that there were seventy souls went down to Egypt. God more than fulfilled his prediction, for 'tis said they were in bondage 430 years, "That they were fruitful and increased abundantly, and multiplied and waxed exceeding mighty and the land was filled with them. Another Pharaoh ascends to the throne, who takes in the situation that Israel has become mightier than themselves. Now, if this were true and God is presiding over the whole affair, does it not look strange that they (God's chosen) should be obliged to submit to all of the afflictions that Pharaoh might concoct to reduce them and keep them under subjection? 'Tis said the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied. But let us see if this be true. Ex. i. 14 says: "*And they made their*

lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigor." Pharaoh instructs the midwives to kill all the male infants. Here God seems to interpose by mental impression, and the midwives plead an excuse "that the Hebrew women are too lively and are delivered before they can get to their posts of duty." This pleases God because the midwives have lied, and he (God) makes them houses.

Would this not look wonderful in our day, to see God building houses for somebody because they had lied? But when Pharaoh discovers this plan does not work, he charges all his people to throw all the male infants into the river, but to save all the daughters alive. God seems to be checkmated here and Pharaoh wins. How long this may have been practiced no tongue can tell; but it must have been a long, long time. It would have been at least from the time that little Moses was set afloat in his basket of bulrushes to the time of his full manhood, and how long before, none ever may know. Just picture to yourselves the number of dead infant bodies that must have been stranded and floating about on this beautiful river Nile. Now there is not one word to show that this law was repealed, or that this wholesale destruction of infants was in any way abolished or interfered with up to the time that the exodus of the Israelites took place. There is no account of any but one exception, and that is Moses. If you place credulity sufficiently above intelligence to make yourself believe!—Moses the author of the Pentateuch!

See Ex. ii. 1. A man of the house of Levi takes to wife a daughter of the house of Levi. Verse 2: She bares a son and hides him three months.

Moses now commences holding forth. Verse 3: She sets him afloat in a basket of bulrushes.

Verse 5: Pharaoh's daughter finds him, and with the nature of true womanhood has compassion on him and sends for a nurse.

Verse 11: He is a man grown. Verse 12: He sees an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew. He looks this way and that, and kills the Egyptian. Verse 13: He is accused of this when he thought the secret was his own. Verse 15: Pharaoh seeks to slay Moses. Moses flees to the land of Midian. Verse 16: Lands in the house of a priest of Midian who has seven daughters. These daughters have charge of their father's flocks.

Verse 17: The shepherds come and drive them away from the watering place. Moses gives these shepherds to understand that he is there, and sees to it that their flocks are watered.

Verse 20: The father wants to know why they did not invite him to dinner. Verse 21: There must one or more of the girls run and call him to dinner, for Moses likes the place and marries one of this priest's daughters.

Verse 22: Moses' first son is born.

Now in this chapter we have traced this much preached of Moses through these rapidly changing vicissitudes from his birth to the time he becomes a father. Please look this Scriptural account over and see if you discover anything that looks as though he

were preparing or has any thought of preparing manuscript out of which to create our "family Bible." Then we will see if throughout his career we can detect anything upon which to base a belief that he is the author of this Pentateuch.

In verse 23, it reads: "*And it came to pass in process of time, that the King of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and their cry came up to God by reason of the bondage. Then God remembers his covenant and has respect now unto them.*"

CHAPTER XI

This brings us to Ex. iii. 1, which reads: "*Now Moses kept the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-law.*" Now, in the preceding chapter, 'tis stated that his father-in-law's name is "Reuel." Has he divorced his first wife and married again, or how is this to be accounted for?

But we must not spend the time higgling over little things. "*Moses led the flock to the backside of the desert and came to the mountain of God (Horeb). And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, and he looked and behold the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.*" And Moses said, "*I will now turn aside, and see this great sight why the bush is not burnt.*" We must tarry here for a little time and analyze this Scripture with studious care. Here are several things I wish you to place upon the tablet of your memory for future use. Observe, "*The Angel of the Lord ap-*

peared to Moses in a flame of fire." Now what did Moses do? He turned aside to see this great sight why the bush is not burnt!

Moses here differed from the average Christian of the present day in several respects. In the first place the Christian of to-day, upon seeing this phenomenon, would say, "I want nothing of you or your burning bush, because I know this is of the Devil, and I want nothing of this in any way, shape or manner: I have my Bible and my Bible is good enough for me." I have heard this remark many times, as no doubt you all have. Now, suppose Moses had received this phenomenon in the same way, and said, "I want none of your hellish necromancy around me, and I will just get my flock and myself away from here, because I am satisfied that you are the same old Devil that got himself in the guise of a snake and fooled father Adam and mother Eve, and now you have gotten yourself in this shape to do a lot more mischief." Had Moses have taken this view of things, it seems as if God's plan would have been badly shaken. I apprehend what the answer of some will be to this; but we will let this pass.

Mark what is said in verse 4, Ex. iii.: "*And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And Moses said, Here am I.*"

He then, whoever it was, told Moses not to get too close up, but to take his shoes from off his feet; for it seems this would make conditions better for some reason (?). Then he said to Moses, "*I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac,*

and the God of Jacob." Well, Moses did what almost any man would have done under the circumstances. He hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Now while we are fresh against this Scripture, I wish to make a few observations: (1) Moses is here ahead of the average Christian in his behavior by thousands of years; (2) who is it talking from this bush? First he is called an angel, the second time he is spoken of he is called Lord, the third time he is called God. Then, after giving some preliminary instructions, he then introduces himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and then proceeds with his communication. Now the communication, what it consisted of, is not material to the case in point. Who it is, is of the utmost importance, because we are not left in doubt, in whatever light we may regard this Pentateuch, but this is the same God that has been doing business ever since the Bible started, and is laying plans to continue in business for a long time to come. Then, who is it? This is the question upon which, I maintain, the Christian world has gone wrong, and has blocked and obstructed the wheels of progress—to say nothing about the loss of life and the suffering that has been caused—for thousands of years. The poor wandering Jew has deceived himself upon this God question, and the Christian world has been deceived by the Jew in turn, and the fraud and deception sweeps on.

The worst feature in this wave-wide error is the element of hypocrisy. Were this eliminated from the Christian religion among those who in the past and who still occupy high places and have fattened upon the credulity of ignorance, how quick would this error

tumble to the level of Paganism or any other old ism that has had its day?

But to get back to the question: Who is this communicating with Moses? Now, my dear friends, I must fall back to a position that I occupied a while ago, where I spoke of angels and fiction. That this is my ground now, that this narrator had a vague idea of excarnate communication, whether any experience or not we cannot say, but think not, for had he have had a better knowledge of the supernal world, he would never have hatched up such an unreasonable story, where the earmarks of fraud are apparent in every column, as is this Pentateuch. He apparently had about the same knowledge as many weavers of fiction have at the present day, where they conclude to make a ghost figure in their plot. And this is how the Christian world has gone wrong; they have mistaken these communications, and accredited them to the Infinite God. This mistake, coupled with the fraud and hypocrisy by a designing priesthood, has brought this blight upon the world.

Right here is embodied one of the most important lessons contained in my work, which I hope you will bear in mind. I cannot follow this subject farther now; it leads into Part II. of this work, where I shall hope to make myself better understood.

This Angel discants upon these promises previously made to the Patriarchs, how he is going to lead them to a good large land flowing with milk and honey. See verse 13. Moses wants to know, when he conveys this news to his people and they ask him what this God's name is, what he shall tell them. Here the Angel

seems to be confused in regard to his own name, and tells Moses, "I am that I Am." That he can tell them that he is I AM, and that he has sent Moses to them.

It is profoundly impressive to follow this Angel's communication, from verse 15, Ex. iii., to the end of this chapter, and consider what a code of morals would be built up from precepts drawn from his teachings. I will here at this time give one example. When this tutelar is going to lead them out of Egypt: "*And it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty: but every woman shall borrow of her neighbor, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons and upon your daughters, and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.*"

If this is God Almighty saying all this, and this is but a priming to what is said! What do you think of it? Do you not see what a terrible inconsistency it is? Is there pleasure in believing it? Now, suppose it to be an Angel; it relieves it of much of its inconsistency, still it remains intolerably unreasonable and inconsistent! Because it could not be a pleasant truth to believe that an Angel could be so depraved and still have power to do such mischief in the world.

But when we reduce this Angel to a figment living only in the imagination of this narrator—who seems to have no sense of what belongs to morality or common decency, as we all know there are such in the world to-day—we then have the problem reduced to the plane of rationality.

But let us not do this author too great injustice.

Do we suppose when he wrote this drivel that he ever dreamed of what the outcome might be? My answer is: From the nature of the case, he could not have known: but this leads us into a sea of speculation.

Let us get back to business.

Now, God makes arrangements for this great exodus that is sure to take place. You should study this Pentateuch carefully, and the whole Scripture as well; for when rightly understood, you will find it of great assistance in giving you a correct understanding of the things that lift us above the secular affairs of this world, and give to us a hope and comfort that this world cannot give—in its mad pursuits for wealth by some, and the question of bare existence by the great majority; and I feel justified in adding, also a comfort that the orthodox religions fail to give. Now this may look to many as though I had lost my cue, was wandering aimlessly, and was unsaying much that I have previously said: but stay, and I will try and explain. Many years ago, when I was a boy, I remember a conversation between several men in regard to some other man that had lied about something. One of these men remarked, "That the best way to get the truth from this man was to take him contrary"; that is, to reverse the order in which he told things; and in this way you could arrive at the truth pretty well. And this, reader, is the way this Bible must many times be interpreted, or it is terribly misleading.

To illustrate, I will here give you but one example. See Ex. xxii. 18: "*Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.*"

Now this text, I claim, should be interpreted and

understood thus: "Thou shalt make no discrimination whatever against a witch."

I will just mention here the useful lesson to be drawn from this Scriptural quotation. 'Tis this: It proves that Spiritualism, as understood to-day, is yet older than the Jewish priesthood, and as this priesthood thought this would be inimical to their prosperity and well-being, they would employ their God to stamp it out. And it is with regret that I own this same spirit exists to a certain extent "until this day."

You should understand, a witch at that time and a spiritual medium are one and the same.

I hope I shall not be, here, misunderstood, as I expect to explain more fully in regard to this subject when I come up to it, but it probably falls into the second part of my work.

I do not pretend to say this rule in regard to the Scripture holds without exception, but many times I hold 'tis true, as I shall expect to prove.

We will now continue our examination of this great foundation stone to the Christian religion, "The Pentateuch."

We will summarize briefly from Ex. iv., beginning with the first of the chapter. Moses did not feel himself equal to the task of opposing Pharaoh's might, and leading these people back to this promised land, which is thickly settled by all of these alien tribes that are to be removed, and pleads inability, that he is not eloquent, and that he feels himself wholly incompetent: but God proceeds to inspire him with miracles. First, his rod is changed to a serpent; this serpent chases Moses around until he begins to think it serious busi-

ness. God tells him to seize it by the tail; this Moses does, and the snake becomes the same old rod. This might look as though Moses would win out, at the first round, were it not for the fact that Pharaoh seems to have some magicians, ostensibly for his own amusement, who seem to work the same racket. But when this miracle is applied for the purpose intended, it seems that God's and Moses' snake comes out ahead, for he swallows all of the magicians' snakes; Moses catches it by the tail; it becomes *in statu quo*. But what has become of the magicians' rods or snakes we are not advised. This would be a good question for the theologian. Well, God has given Moses several miracles from which Pharaoh is permitted to take his choice. But here is a most difficult problem: I think this one stands out as prominent as any one contained in the Book, one where blind faith has to assert itself entirely to the exclusion of reason, one where humanity has to yield absolutely to the most indamnable depths of depravity to which the mind of dissolute man can descend, to follow God in his plans to prove his power to Pharaoh and to Israel. God promises to harden Pharaoh's heart; so this old mooted question of "free agency" is in this case entirely eliminated from Pharaoh's part in this wholesale tragedy. Then God proceeds to visit his plagues in rapid succession throughout all Egypt—sparing his chosen—sufficient to have utterly destroyed all life throughout the kingdom several times over, everything human, animal and vegetable. Observe, just before he comes down with his last visitation, when, according to the account, there could have been nothing left alive,—that of smiting all of

Egypt's first-born; and he instructs Moses in regard to the commemoration of this event, the feast of the Passover, as a memorial of this Godly History. He then gives instructions to Moses for the women to borrow of the Egyptians, previous to this last expression of his power, all of their jewelry, and their Sunday clothes, with which to apparel and adorn themselves, so that the poor Egyptians would not have a decent thing to wear to the funerals which were sure to take place immediately following. God promises to attune their minds so they will cheerfully hand them over. Again, Moses was preserved in infancy through the watchful care of this God, we are given to understand, in a basket of bulrushes, and by the compassion of Pharaoh's daughter, for the special purpose of leading out this people; but the law to throw all of the male infants into the river has never been repealed, so this, according to the account, would have been the common fate of all the rest, so that all Israel, the male population, would have been reduced to a frazzle by this time and what remained would have been in their dotage at least. But here is Aaron. How did he escape? All Israel seems to be robust and well manned, and seems to have an abundance of domestic animals for sacrificial as well as for all other purposes, a priesthood well organized, and yet they are so oppressed that they have to scour the bare fields of Egypt for stubble with which to make their full tale of brick. Where and how did they obtain food for all of these domestic animals? I would ask. We find them now well laden with the Egyptians' borrowed jewelry and clothing and are making their exodus from

Egypt; but God concludes to give Pharaoh another belt, and still manipulates his heart without remorse and impels him to pursue Israel into the bed of the Red Sea, with his vast army, horses and chariots, where they are overwhelmed and destroyed.

Is there pleasure, consolation, or joy in trying to believe stuff like this? In order to believe this, intelligence must be set aside, or give place to blind faith—and faith in what? We have no reason to judge from this story itself that it is God doing this, because he is announced at first as an angel, and be he angel or God, the orthodox Devil himself could not outdo him for treachery, wickedness, and inhumanity.

The very best feature about this history is it internally proves itself to be fallacious, and therefore the Almighty is exonerated from such diabolical behavior as this.

I apprehend what the reply to this will be by orthodoxy: "that this is all done away with under the new dispensation, that Jesus Christ is the light of the world, and it is him through whom we must be saved." We will see how this is. I have spoken of this casually, but when I come up to it I expect to treat this question with all fairness, that all may see the rationality of the Christian's hope and faith and what it rests upon.

What interest should I or could I have in trying to pervert the truth? The churchman tells us that the truth is the all-important thing, and the thing to be diligently sought for: then, I would ask, if I can point out error in their Book which is unmistakable, should they not be willing to note and acknowledge it? And

if truth should be found outside of their Book which redounds to man's welfare and happiness, what just reason can they give for turning their backs to it? Again, if there should be found truth in their Book which they had failed to discover, why should they not be pleased and willing to have it discovered unto them, that they may give it to their hungry flocks?

Therefore, let us happily pursue our investigations. We have now followed these children from Canaan to Egypt, through their 430 years' bondage, their exodus through the Red Sea, to where they now are, in the Wilderness, God supporting them on manna and quails. We will continue to follow them through their vicissitudes in this wilderness, but we must avoid going too much into details. We will try and hit upon such portions as are germane to our work.

Now observe Ex. xvi. 35: "*And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited: they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.*" If Moses wrote this Pentateuch, why should he have written the conclusion of their history in this wilderness, when it first commenced: and since he never led them over the river, how did he know but that they sinned again when they were up to the banks of Jordan and were set back another forty years? Again, he says, until they came to a land inhabited; observe how this tallies with this forty years' history; their wars and conquests, and butcheries that were carried on, and the women that were ripped up being with child. Consider this wilderness; it is not made clear whether it is woods or desert, but we are given to understand that

it is entirely devoid of anything that supports animal life, so that God must miraculously feed them on quails and manna for forty years. We are reminded all this time, lest we might forget, that they have much cattle, sheep, goats, asses and all domestic animals known to the Orient: and while it rained manna and God made the wind to blow quails their way, and water had to be obtained through God's or Moses' miracles. But there is not one word about showers of straw for these cattle; how were they kept alive? I would ask. They must be kept in good condition or God would put up a kick when a burnt offering was made. Observe, again, Ex. xvii. 1-8. But take notice of the preceding verses of this chapter, as it is necessary to a clear understanding of the situation. They have journeyed from the Wilderness of Sin, "according to the commandment of the Lord, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink." These children were in a state of insurrection, and Moses cried unto the Lord from very fear of being stoned. God tells him to take with him the elders of Israel and this historic and all-potent rod, and lead the people to a certain rock, and between God and Moses and the rod, the rock would be made to yield sufficient water for their needs. Verse 8: "*Then came Amalek and fought with Israel in Rephidim.*"

Now, dear reader, where in the name of the three Gods in the Christians' Pantheon, did Amalek get his manna and water in this wilderness, which is totally destitute of food and drink? Yet here is Amalek in good fighting condition, as the history shows; for when this rod of Moses and of God was not held high

in the air from the top of the hill where Moses could command a view of the belligerents, then Amalek prevailed, and when he held it up good and high, Israel prevailed: so it was imperative upon Moses to hold this rod up high, which he did until his arm grew weak and heat drops gathered on his cheek; so they were obliged to build a stone pile, over which Moses could balance this rod, with Joshua and Hur on either side of Moses to keep him steady. Just picture this in your mind's eye, and consider how "great are the mysteries of Godliness."

Now we will have to pass lightly over a considerable portion of this Scripture, where Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, came to visit him, and bring his wife and two sons, who had tarried behind. But how they got through the Red Sea is not made plain. Jethro discovers that God is laying too much upon Moses and has to interpose an interference in regard to court proceedings to make it easier for Moses.

We will now speak briefly about the wonderful and terrible manifestations of God on Mount Sinai, after they had departed Rephidim, and had pitched in the desert of Sinai. God instructs Moses how Israel must get themselves in readiness on the third day, for he (God) is going to make arrangements so that all the people can get a look at him.

CHAPTER XII

But God seems to have promised more than he afterward concluded to fulfill; for immediately following

(see Ex. xix. 11 to end of chapter) he says: "*And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: There shall not a hand touch it, but he shall be surely stoned or shot through; whether it be beast or man it shall not live.*"

Now, in modern phraseology this would be put in this way: That God did not show as he advertised, but, for all, he gave a first-class entertainment. His thunderings and lightnings, and his tremendous voice rendered more terrific with his big trumpet, so that the little children of Israel at the foot of the mountain trembled with very fear!

And Moses brought those children close up to the dead-line, and God with his smoke and fire and shaking the mountain and hooting longer and louder through his trumpet—and finally called Moses up to the top of the mount. Was not Moses a brave man? Moses goes up to the top of the mount. God sends him straightway back with the understanding that this is no boys' play and that they had better mind their eye or he may break loose and kill a few thousand.

This is an underrated account of this show, as all may see if they will but take the time to read this Scripture (Ex. xix.). Is this a free-for-nothing show? I should say not exactly. God wants pretty good pay for his time and services, as you will see. After Moses came down to warn the "children," it seems he went back directly, although this is not specifically men-

tioned, but what follows cannot leave us in doubt. He was up to the top of this mount forty days. Here God wrote and gave Moses the Ten Commandments on the tables of stone. Here God gave Moses his first course in law. Here we get the initiative of godly jurisprudence. Here we get a faint conception of the emolument God requires for his divine service. Here we get our first lesson in regard to what is to be done with God's most inveterate foe, "the Witch." Here we get a primary lesson in Redemption (Ex. xxii. 29, 30). This greatly mystified me at one time, and I took pains to look this passage up in the different commentaries that I could find on the Bible, to see what it meant where it says, "*Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the first-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me, the same with the oxen and sheep*"; and as the sons were included in the same category, I could not make out but they were to be sacrificed to please this jealous God: and though God seems to delight in human slaughter, it may, however, be averted in this case by redemption. The killing of the son may be expiated by giving a lamb or an ox, as the case may be, in place thereof. So, you see, here is another initiative lesson on this Redemption question, which is the bulwark of the Christian religion of to-day.

I will now invite your attention to a few things contained in Ex. xxiv. This I consider of special interest to the Bible student. Among the things I wish to speak of here is Aaron's and the children of Israel's relapse into idolatry while Moses was up into the mount with God getting the Ten Commandments ar-

ranged, and other important business, a draft of the Tabernacle, etc. Observe, "Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel." These by special arrangement were permitted to get a full view of Israel's God (see verses 10, 11). God is described as being enthroned on a paved work of sapphire, "and upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: and they saw God and did eat and drink." I suppose what is meant by this is that this did not kill them as they had expected when God gave his first exhibition, and his warning. But here is the interesting part: Aaron, you should bear in mind, has had a full experience on this God question, he went with Moses before Pharaoh; he was in close touch with everything God said and did in relation to his visitations upon the Egyptians; he well knew the potency of Moses' rod; in fine, Aaron was the captain of the priesthood, the one that was to wear the Ephod, and all of the priestly paraphernalia, as God ordered. He had just heard God reiterate how he is going to drive all of these tribes, the Philistines, Jebusites, Canaanites, etc., out of this promised land, and his voice was with the people's when they said, "All the words which the Lord hath said will we do." Now, just think of it! Take advice! While Moses is attending to this business which is to thunder adown the millennia, proclaiming the greatness of God, what is Aaron and his subordinates and all Israel up to? See Ex. xxxii. 1: "*And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for*

as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him." What would we suppose, in this case, Aaron would do? What does he do? He tells the people to break off all the golden earrings of their wives and children. He proceeds to make a pattern and to cast a golden calf. He then proceeds to carve it with a graving tool; and all Israel, who have witnessed all of this most wonderful demonstration of God's power, his wrath and munificence, his promises of both judgment and mercy, relapse precipitately back into idolatry, by worshiping this calf, and Aaron heading the movement. Well, this creates a high time in camp, when you take a view of both sides of the question (the calf side and the God side). Moses, when he comes to a full realization of what is going on, casts down the tables of the commandments and breaks them into smithereens, which have cost so much time and trouble, grasps his sword and steps into the breach and shouts, "All that are on God's side, come with me!" The result is, three thousand men are killed with the sword, and to make this slaughter more impressive, members of the same family are instructed to slay fathers or brothers, as the case may be: that God may be avenged. After the battle Moses takes Aaron to task for this iniquitous proceeding. Aaron says he put the gold into the fire and this calf came out. Here it is painfully evident that Aaron has lied. Does this not look strange that Aaron should backslide at such a time as this, when God was right there doing miracles all the time, so before one had grown cold he was right on hand with a fresh one, and yet Aaron the High Priest would

backslide at this critical time and lie! And yet the good parson will tell us we must believe the whole of this Bible or be damned!

Now I wish to call your attention to another thing that likely prolonged Moses' stay up in the mount, and caused this unfortunate relapse: Drawing up the plans for the tabernacle. You should read the description of this tabernacle carefully, with all of its appurtenances, the ark of the covenant and all, and make an estimate for yourselves about how many tons of gold would be required: count up the boards, sixty or over; consider the size of these boards, 18 feet long and 26 inches wide, all to be overlaid with pure gold. Then the curtains, loops and sashes, sockets, roof of ram-skins and badger-skins, all of the stuff described with all of the furnishings would run up into the millions, and there would need be plants for casting and machinery for metal-working way ahead of anything spoken of in Jewish history up to the time of their captivity. Now remember where they are and when; this is the third month in the wilderness. When Moses goes up in the mount, God is feeding them on manna and quails, all of this time—even when Aaron makes the golden calf—God goes into every detail about this tabernacle, till one is bewildered, even though he has studied architecture, as he reads the strange description of this strange construction to be with all its furnishings. See Ex. xxxi. 1, 3: "*And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, See I have called by name Bazeleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: and I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner*

of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold and in silver and in brass."

God gives in minute detail how he has inspired men with understanding to execute the whole job, but observe, this is just as Moses is to take his departure from the mount, and on nearing the camp he hears this tumult of hilarity, or Joshua it was who heard it first. Then follows this precipitate butchery. It is evident from the account that God would have annihilated all Israel for this breach of conduct, right here and now, had not Moses have shown God the view the Egyptians would take of the proceedings. See Ex. xxxii. 11, "*And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord why dost thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand.*" After Moses expostulates and reminds God of the promises he has made to this people God bethinks himself, and repents him of the evil which he thought to do.

But God concludes it will be hazardous for him to be in close attendance, lest he lose control of his temper and do something he may regret, so he sends an angel in his stead; now just where and when this angel vacates his office of leadership and God resumes his old place, is not made just clear, but we will continue the trail as best we can. See Gen. xxxii. 34-35, Notwithstanding that God has placed an angel between himself and his people he forbade them to wear the ornaments which they borrowed of the Egyptians "And the Lord still plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made."

Now in regard to this much preached of tabernacle,

right on the heels of this misstep and the terrible tragedy which followed. See Ex. xxxiii. 7, "*And Moses took the tabernacle and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp and called it the tabernacle of the congregation.*"

Here Moses has set up this tabernacle before it was built! The ecclesiast may say this is an error in the translators, or a misplacement, but just consider the probabilities or possibilities of a thing of this description being built, in fact, with those Israelites stranded on this desert, God having to sustain them with manna, for it seems that the quails were very uncertain and fluctuated to such tremendous extremes that they could not be counted on with any great degree of certainty or pleasure, as I shall try to show. Now while it is fresh in mind to give you an idea of how God run this quail deal we will turn the pages of the family Bible to Num. x. 1. You observe from reading this chapter that the complaints of Israel ran high because they had become tired of manna as a steady diet, just as we all do of a single thing too long at a time; but nevertheless this roused God's indignation to such a pitch that it set a fire going which consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp. The people cried unto Moses and Moses prayed unto the Lord and the fire was quenched. The lesson to be drawn from this is that we must not expect to do our own praying, we must have our praying done for us by those clothed with Godly authority.

It appears that there is a large mixed population of Gentiles during this whole forty year period in close proximity and right among this chosen people. Why

or how this could be baffles one not clothed with Godly understanding: whether God was feeding them on the same manna as he did his own or how and upon what they subsisted we are left to conjecture.

But after Moses' prayers had quenched this fire, this mixed multitude fell to lusting, and the children of Israel wailed louder than before. Saying who will give us flesh to eat? This worriment was kept up until God's anger was kindled greatly, and Moses was displeased. It seems from the account that Moses possessed more of Job's quality than did God himself. Still these children continued to worry and bewail the day that they left Egypt, where they had fish and cucumbers and leeks, and melons, and onions, and garlic. At this God's anger waxes greater, and Moses complains bitterly to God for having been called as their leader, because of their continual cry for flesh.

Moses says to God, "*And if thou deal thus with me, kill me I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight, and let me not see my wretchedness.*" By this time God's anger reaches a point where it must have vent, so he lays his plans; he tells Moses to tell the people to sanctify themselves, to put on cheerful countenances and be in good spirits, because to-morrow they are going to be furnished with plenty of flesh. They were not to have it for one day only, but for a whole month, until they grew tired of it. It is apparent to the casual observer from God's manner and tone of expression that this promise boded no good to Israel; we will see how this proves in the sequel, God sets the wind to blowing from the sea, and this wind brought quails, just consider for a moment the amount of quails

that were brought by this wind: a day's journey in every direction from the camp these quails lay in a solid stratum two cubits deep, over three feet. Here is the Bible for it "And the people stood up all that day and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered quails; he that gathered least gathered ten homers; a homer=six bushels, two pecks and four quarts, which would mean that the one who gathered least had in store sixty-four and one-half bushels of quails which they spread about the camp. And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague. This quail deal takes place according to the marginal chronology about one year after their passage through the Red Sea. The male adult population at this time is 600,000 this presumably places the whole number of souls at approximately 2,000,000, so you can form some slight conception of the magnitude of this joke which God has played upon his chosen. Christian friends think of this bit of history relating to the Father God when the parson admonishes you to rely implicitly upon the promises of God, and to take him at his word.

At the time of the golden calf episode God promised he was going to send an angel to lead Israel in his stead; but we are forced to think he has changed his mind and is officiating in person for this personage bears the same old name of Lord and God, and identifies himself in every particular as has this God ever since he commenced doing business.

Now I will invite your attention to a text in Num. xiv. 21. "*But as truly as I live all the earth shall be*

filled with the glory of the Lord." This is a text that without doubt gives the Gentile or Christian churches great hope and unmistakable assurance that this is a harbinger of what was to come; but you can clearly see this was said only in a heat of passion by this vacillating revengeful God, by reading the verses following in the chapter. I will give here the first two:

"Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice. Surely they shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it."

Does not this sound big for the God who created and governs the universe, with our conception of what the universe is at this time.

We will now turn the pages of this Bible back just two chapters as there is a matter of interest I had in mind to call your attention to, you will find it in Num. xii. 3, which reads, *"Now the man Moses was very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth."* I speak of this because in my premises I assumed these five books ascribed to Moses were not written by him, but were anonymous and without authority and this passage I offer as evidence that what I postulate is correct, for how could an author especially one engaged upon such a momentous work as a revelation from God, break right into his subject with such a silly effusion of self praise as this. While this may not carry conviction as does some of the things which I have and still expect to produce and embody into the bundle of evidence that Moses is but a child of the imagination.

We must not higggle over little things so we will now turn to Num. xxi, beginning with the first of the chapter. "*And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites.*" Now it should be remembered that Moses' father-in-law, Jethro was a Midianite, and from his good advice and conduct, we are led to think the Midianites a very good class of people: but without apprising us of any offense committed by them, the Lord tells Moses to avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites. Remember this is the same God that wrote on the tables of stone. "*Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not steal,*" etc. Now observe the conduct of this God-inspired man Moses.

Now when the army returned from this murdering and plundering excursion the account goes on as follows, verse 13, "*And Moses and Eleazer the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp; and Moses was wroth with officers of the host, with the captains over thousands, and the captains over hundreds, which came from the battle; and Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? behold, these caused the children of Israel through the council of Balaam to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord. Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.*"

Among the detestable villains that have in any period of the world disgraced the name of man it is impossible to find a greater than Moses, if this account be true.

Here is an order to butcher the boys, to massacre the mothers, and ravish the daughters. Let any mother who is bound by the mystic chords of affection to her dear old family Bible, put herself in the situation of those mothers; one child murdered, another destined to violence, and herself in the hands of an executioner.

Let any daughter put herself in the situation of those daughters destined as a prey to the murderers of a mother and brother, and what will be their feelings! It is in vain that we attempt to impose upon nature for nature will have her course, and the religion that tortures all her social ties is a false religion.

After this diabolical order follows an account of the plunder taken and the manner of dividing it; and here it is that the profaneness of priestly hypocrisy increases the catalogue of crime. Verse thirty-five says there were thirty and two thousand persons in all, of women that had not known man by lying with him, a rational estimate from this data would be there were about the same number of women butchered for the crime of having been married. In short the subject matter contained in this chapter as well as in a great many other parts of the Bible, are too horrid and revolting for humanity to read or for decency to hear.

Just let us consider for a moment the rationality and probability of this history: here are these Midianites if they were not in this same wilderness where God was keeping Israel alive all of this while by miraculously sending manna from above, where were they? I would ask. It appears from the amount of plunder that was secured that these Midianites were a prosperous people and were in possession of much wealth. Dear reader

ask your kind parson to explain to you some of these knots of scripture hard to solve, and see what answer he can make.

For reasons that are obvious we must hasten our review of Moses and his doings. I am desirous of getting out of this wilderness, as I should adjudge you all must be, and as we are taught to believe these chosen ones of God grew weary also of this forty-year sojourn, of the manna, and the strangely diversified visitations with which Jehovah visited them. There are many things I am loth to pass unnoticed, but must forbear for reasons before mentioned.

CHAPTER XIII

I now wish to call your attention to some portions of Deuteronomy, the last book ascribed to Moses.

We will now turn our attention to Deut. xviii. 15-18, *"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him we shall hearken; (18) "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."*

I make this selection because the theological student and the Sunday-school scholar are referred to these passages as being one of the positive promises of the Christ of the New Testament. Now my aim will be to look up these promises and prophecies as we come up to them, that we may see just to what extent we are justified in the conclusion that a Messiah is promised or prophesied of in the Old Testament scriptures.

Firstly I wish to call your attention to the headings of this (xviii.) chapter which I before referred you to is no part of the canon: this reads (15.) "*Christ the Prophet is to be heard.*" (20.) "*The presumptuous Prophet is to die.*"

It is painfully evident that this heading here is intended to deceive and delude the reader by suggesting an error before he has reached the text itself.

Now who is this presumptuous prophet here spoken of? None can well misunderstand who is meant here, it is Moses. How does he thus become anathematized and why must he die? Moses overstepped his authority at the time he brought water from this historic rock of Horeb. Caused likely by the great stress of the occasion, between his countrymen dying of thirst, and his being stoned to death by them, in this crisis Moses forgets to reverence God just as God thinks he should be revered so the "black hand" is laid upon Moses, he must die, and here Moses is apprising Israel of his successor who is to take his place and lead them over Jordan, and the one here meant is none other than Joshua, and this is all that is meant in fact by this prophecy.

Moses or Moses' God had no more thought of this Christ as a light to the Gentiles, than does this desk upon which I am writing. The extermination of the Gentiles was their only thought, and their only care, and the plunder they might secure thereby, as we will see when we follow them over the river. Now we will just turn a leaf of this book to (Chap. xx.) I have referred to this previously, but as it is right on the heels of this much talked of and referred to prophecy

of Christ, I wish to call your attention to it here that you may see to what extent this God of Israel is thinking about, or caring for the salvation or future happiness of the Gentile. The Ecclesiast recommends the searching and studying the scripture, so why should not I. Here are verses 16-17, you should read the whole chapter, "*But of the cities of these people which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save nothing alive that breatheth.*"

"*But thou shalt utterly destroy them, namely the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.*"

We will now turn our attention for a brief space to the Law of Moses as handed down to him from God. From my early boyhood I have heard this law referred to from the pulpit; the law and the prophets I was impressed were two of the greatest gifts God had ever bestowed upon mankind from Heaven; that the other portions of the Old Testament scripture were to an extent historical, and although there was much to be learned of God in this sacred history; but when you wanted God's sacred truth unadulterated, and in a quantity that fairly sweeps you from your feet, then you need to turn to the Law and the Prophets.

There is so much of this law, and yet while it may not be so elaborate as the common and statute law of our civil and criminal codes of to-day, but there is too much to examine in detail, so we will take a sample or two which must suffice. It is with some difficulty that I make these selections owing to the excessive tendency toward the obscene.

Here is selection first, Ex. xxi, 20-21, "*If a man smite his servant or his maid with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall surely be punished.*" Notwithstanding if he live a day or two, he shall not be punished; for he is his money.

Selection two Num. xvi. 32-46, "*And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron and unto all the congregation, and they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the Lord said unto Moses*" —here the Lord gives the law direct—" *the man shall surely be put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones. And all the congregation brought him without the camp and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the Lord commanded Moses.*"

Selection three, Deut. xxii. 20-21, "*But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel: then they shall bring out the damsel, to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die, because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you.*"

Do I need to make any comments? You may say I have chosen samples that are not just fair, that I have made my choice among the worst laws in the whole code. I think not dear friends, but while there are some that are better, and some that may come to the level of present day morality, but if this code was given to Moses by any other than a man-made God, why should

or how could there be such immoral, indecent, unjust, inhuman, degrading, enervating, diabolical, stuff as this be placed here? How can a belief in stuff like this afford pleasure? And yet this Bible in its entirety is preached and taught by Orthodoxy at this twentieth century as the unerring word of God, and this Law of Moses is offered as God's holy Law.

Think of the innocent lives that the enforcement of this law has cost: of the torture that people have endured till death has come to their relief all for the glory of Israel's God! The edict of this God which says: "*Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live,*" has set aflame the fires of hell, or of bigotry and ignorance, which has encircled the globe and has left its scars upon every nation known as Christian; even America has her dark pages of history, an instance of which I will cite, known as the Salem massacre where twenty innocent souls were sacrificed to Israel's God. Running the state by this Mosaic code has been tried, dear friends, but thanks be to the Infinite and human intelligence or which you please we trust 'twill never be tried again.

What mystifies me much, is, how a Christian missionary can have the effrontery at this time and age to put this Bible in the hands of what he calls the heathen, and teach them that it is the inspired and infallible word of God.

If the Christian religions founded on the Bible are growing among what we are pleased to call the heathen nations it is certainly dying at the center. It is a sad reflection on Christianity that right where it had its birth and inception, Christianity is naught.

It is also a sad reflection upon the Christian religion,

the late war between Russia and Japan. Russia a Christian nation whose priestly pretensions and dominations rank high and were relying much upon faith in God's promises, while Japan a little Pagan nation of no great pretensions overpowered Russia who boasted herself as being among the greatest, if not the greatest of the Christians of the world.

Now I wish to invite your attention to Deut. xxviii. Observe here what God promises to this nation—the Israelites—if they adhere strictly to all these laws, ordinances, rites and ceremonies, passovers, exterminations and everything, both prospective and retrospective, verse one, “*And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God to observe and do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come on thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.*” Everything pertaining to this world which heart can wish is to come in great profusion if they render implicit obedience to God. You should read this chapter carefully.

But on the other hand if they disobey, verse 15, “*But if it shall come to pass if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God to observe and do all his commandments and statutes which I command thee this day: that all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee.*”

Then follows a series of curses somewhat like unto a papal curse, except it does not extend beyond this life. See verse twenty, “*The Lord shall send upon thee cursing vexation and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine*

hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings whereby thou hast forsaken me." Also verse thirty, "*Thou shalt betroth a wife and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build a house and shall not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard and shall not gather the grapes thereof.*" See 36, "*The Lord shall bring thee and thy king which thou shalt set over thee unto a nation which neither thou or thy fathers have known, and there thou shalt serve other gods, wood and stone.*" The whole taken together is a sweeping curse, and contains it would seem all that a depraved mind could invent with much repetition to keep the coward in his track: but when he comes down with the threat to put a wooden or a stone God in his place, the threat certainly loses its force, for who would not prefer a wooden or stone god, to one who has played the strange pranks that has this God: a wood or stone god would at least set up and behave himself while Israel's God has not.

Now here is a thing germane to this subject, this God has not up to this time spoken of or hinted at one thing concerning a future life; his law, his impelled wars for extermination and spoliation, everything in connection and appertaining to this God is purely materialistic and carnal; and this you will find holds true with both God and his chosen to the end of the Old Testament Scripture, a period covering according to their Book of 4,000 years. Now if Christ was promised as told us by the theologian these were entirely ignorant of this promise so that the slayer and the slain must find themselves upon a common level, and the question that forces itself uppermost is where?

I am well aware that there are those who will denounce this as blasphemy and may think that the fagot and stake should still be in force for this terrible sin and injustice in perverting the Almighty's plan, in not properly showing how these promises and prophecies of a Saviour to come have been made and are woven like a golden thread and is traceable through the whole fabric of this Old Testament Scripture, and what a glorious fulfillment of all this we find in the New Testament. Dear friends I will be pleased to attend to this Christ question when I come to it, and am going to hurry as fast as I can consistently, but I wish to bring you properly against this all important subject.

Now let me here ask you a question. Is this book of revelation and plan of salvation entirely satisfactory to you? Did you ever take time to analyze and consider what is meant by the word revelation?

If this Bible as a revelation, and the plan of salvation drawn therefrom are entirely satisfactory to you, I am not writing this book for you and you need read no farther; but will say to you that I once heard a Methodist minister declare from the pulpit that this revelation was not just what he would like, but that we must accept it because it was all we had, or words to that effect. Now the only value that can attach to any revelation from any God is that which best answers the purpose of robbing the grave of its victory, and taking the sting from death, or to put it as Job has it "If a man die shall he live again?" Does this Bible, after studying it carefully, answer this question entirely to your satisfaction? To such as think it does not, we will proceed with our work.

We will now turn our attention to Moses again for a

little time. Moses was like the proverbial swan. He gives us a very prolix song of fifty-two verses just before taking his departure. See Deut. xxxii. He then pronounces a benediction upon the twelve tribes of Israel. See Deut. xxxiii. Then in Deut. xxxiv, he proceeds to give us his obituary which closes the books ascribed to Moses. Now for Truth's sake we will make a brief study of this last chapter, verse one, says, "*And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho: and the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea.*"

Just consider the names of the divisions of this country Moses is permitted to see, and contemplate what this signifies in regard to when this chapter was written. Here God shows Moses all of this promised land! Just think of what an immense area this must be that Moses' natural eyes could encompass—unaided with a telescope—whose inhabitants were to become as the sands of the sea. Verse five, "*So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.*"

We are left to infer that Moses died upon the top of Mount Pisgah, but was buried in a valley in the land of Moab. "*But no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day.*" This part of the story I believe; that no man knows or ever knew the whereabouts of Moses' grave, for reasons which I need not at this time give. But just consider this hackneyed expression here used "*until this day.*" This has been interlarded innumerably from

the beginning to the end of these books, what significance can be placed upon this? If one were writing history as it occurs would he make use of this expression. See verses 9-10, "*And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom: for Moses had laid his hands upon him.*" How does this appeal to your mentality? If Moses could have filled a man with the spirit of wisdom by laying his hands upon him, why did he not spend more of his time in this way? Verse ten, "*And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses whom the Lord knew face to face.*"

Now Moses must be exonerated from pronouncing this eulogy on himself for Moses is dead and the Lord has buried him. Now the question that comes to the front is who is writing this? It is evident to any one of ordinary discrimination that the stylus has not changed hands as we slide from Deut. to Joshua: the style of diction is the same, it has the same ear-marks in every respect.

It is evident that the writer is reaching a long way back into the past from many proofs as well as this verse under review, "*And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses.*" How long since I would be pleased to know. Moses according to the account is just dead, and yet according to this text the writer is making a comparison among a category of prophets and Moses was the best or greatest. That this Bible thus far is anonymous and was not written until centuries after it is claimed to have been and that it is a fraud is evident. We have some five or six points of proof positive that this portion of the scripture is fiction. First Gen. xiv. 14. Where Abram, the Hebrew, pur-

sued Lot's captors into Dan. Second Ex. xvi. 35. And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan. Third, Gen. xxxvii. The kings that reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel. Fourth, Num. xii. 3. Moses advising us how excessively meek he is or was observe this was given in the past tense. Fifth, Deut. xxxiv. Moses giving the account of his own death and burial. Sixth. The expression unto this day which is many times repeated. Again the presumptive evidence is overwhelming that this Pentateuch is fiction and anonymous and is destined to pass the stage of belief that it is a revelation from God.

There is a thing that may have a tendency with some, to bolster this fallacy up more than any other one thing, and that is, that there are Jews who claim to be descendants of Israel, scattered broadcast all over the globe, and that they at least a portion of them claim this account to be true, and that they are practicing this thing called circumcision "unto this day."

I admit we have purloined this Old Testament Scripture from the Jews and their God also, but can this make it true.

There were hundreds of Gods, the holy fathers had to choose from, the question is could they have chosen one more barbarous? I do not see how it were possible.

But now the question comes to the surface if this Pentateuch is fiction, and since I have made promise that it still contains that which is of value you may think it time that I make this to appear at least to

some extent, which I will now aim to do with pleasure.

Now you remember the account of Jacob wrestling with the angel at Peniel, and that I constrained you to bear in mind how angels were woven into this story of the Pentateuch? Well there is nothing directly pertinent about this to our case only as it serves as a pointer. Now we will turn back to Ex. xxii, 18, which reads, "*Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.*" See Lev. xix. 31, "*Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seeks after wizards to be defiled by them I am the Lord your God.*"

See Lev. xx. 6, "*And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits and after wizards to go a whoring after them I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.*" See Num. xxii. 31, "*Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand; and he bowed down his head and fell flat on his face.*" See Deut. xviii. 10-11, "*There shall not be found any among you that useth divination or an observer of times, or an enchanter or a witch, or a charmer or a consulter with familiar spirits or a wizard or a necromancer.*"

Now it is evident that there was some power, force or law existant that was inimical to this God's plans and purposes, a something that for some indefinable reason, he wanted stamped from the face of the earth. The question is what was this that God so hated? What was there about the witch, or the one that had a familiar spirit that this God had such a dread and abhorrence of? There is no chance for but one conclusion, and that is this: The Jewish Priesthood wanted the sole monop-

oly over the realm of mystery and miracle, so that they could hold absolute sway with their despotism and to encourage informers and to quickly dispatch any who might be suspected of holding intercourse with excarnate intelligences was their policy, so they proceed to make their tribal God to include this law in his code, in regard to killing witches and those who have familiar spirits with much repetition and variation sufficient to cover all cases which might come before their courts.

This has not usually been understood by the great majority of writers against the Scripture and theology and could not well be understood at this time were it not for the light that modern research and investigation has thrown upon this dark past.

We cannot take up the time here with a vain attempt to show to you the hellish deeds that have been committed in the name of God in enforcing and executing this law. Now, dear friends, as I have before adjured you that I may not be misunderstood, let me ask what object could I have in saying what I have said unless I am fully satisfied I am giving you the truth and that this truth can be demonstrated and proven beyond the shadow of rational doubt?

One of the saddest things in human history, is this, that the Christian world for centuries, or from its beginning have misunderstood and misinterpreted this Bible. This is apparent from the burden of their hymns and prayers that they are not satisfied. Their hymns are teeming with breathings like this "God help my unbelief," and "Hark from the tombs a doleful sound," etc., etc., and the burden of their prayers is to have their faith strengthened, which proves that the Chris-

tian is not wholly satisfied with his Bible or his creed.

But here is a stanza from another hymn which has many times floated to my mind from the mystic sea of memory, which adjures us to,

“Mount up the heights of wisdom.

And crush each error low.

Keep back no words of knowledge

.That human hearts should know.”

With this admonition we will pursue our toil.

CHAPTER XIV

If you are not entirely satisfied with this Book called God's revelation as unfolded by the modern theologian, and have a desire to know if possibly there may not be something better, remain with me and I will give you the best my feeble pen can give, environed with my limitations of knowledge, time and space. Then let us prayerfully pursue our work. These passages I have referred to in the law, and others I expect to point out as we come to them, prove conclusively that the Jewish Rabbi or Priest, the Papal Priest and our Protestant Churches, have all of these weary centuries been fighting and toiling on the wrong side of this Bible proposition, and have been feeding their flocks on the chaff and husks while the wheat has been ruthlessly rejected.

When I first came into the knowledge that mankind in the mortal could commune with those who had departed this life, it was with great pleasure and satisfaction that I learned and came to an understanding

of the analogy between what is termed "Modern Spiritualism" and "Biblical Spiritualism" to have it proved and made palpable that it was all one and the same thing, and that it had been obscured all of these milleniades by the juggles of Priestcraft and ignorance. Of course this is no discovery that I lay any claim to more than to be able to comprehend when these all potent facts are discovered to me. But the way the world has been deceived and the terrible error the Christian world has stumbled into through the wrong teaching of those claiming to be clothed with Godly authority is so palpable, that I cannot but feel it incumbent upon me to give this my testimony for what I firmly believe to be the truth, and which I claim can be demonstrated and proved.

The data we have thus far discovered we will carefully preserve; there is more to add as we pursue our work. We will now leave the scenes of this Pentateuch behind with but this to add. When this is proved to be fiction pure and simple and is without authority, which none can rationally dispute the rest of the Bible with the New Testament included is without foundation and must eventually fall to its proper level, or where it properly belongs.

Now we will turn our attention to the Book of Joshua. No one can but observe that it is the same author that wrote the preceding books, and laid the whole plot, and has now brought these Israelites right up to the banks of Jordan. The climax is now reached and there has got to be something doing. Observe how he pours out his inspiration. Then he commands officers to pass through the host and command the people

saying (Joshua i. 11.) "*Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess.*"

Now Joshua what do you mean by this kind of talk, when we have been told repeatedly, over and over, that the Lord God was feeding you all, with manna these forty years, and in Chap. v. 12, of your own book it says, "*And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.*" What think ye? Now all of these plans for bloodshed and destruction have come to a focus; Jericho is the first doomed city. It looks as though the writer of this sacred history was inclined toward burlesque at times and here is an example. Joshua sends two spies over the river to reconnoiter and ascertain the strength of Jericho's walls: these two spies spy out a harlot by the name of Rahab and lodge with her. She manifests great sagacity in misleading her king in securing their capture and destruction. These spies promise Rahab and her nearest in kin salvation when Jericho is overthrown, and here is the Scripture for it (Josh. vi. 25.) "*And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive and her father's household and all that she had: and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.*"

Dear friends, who wrote this stuff? Rahab the harlot is dwelling in Israel unto this day! Is not this enough to put a smile on the face of the ungodly?

Now we have not got much time on the program for

Joshua so we will be obliged to do him pretty quickly, we will recount some of the old veteran's exploits for they are indeed wonderful, some of which have never been duplicated and I trust never will be.

His throwing down the walls of Jericho with the priestly blasts from the rams horns is indeed a marvel.

His settlement with the transgressor Achan of the tribe of Judah for taking of the accursed thing and hiding it under his tent, (Chap. vii. 24.) "*And Joshua and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: And all Israel stoned them with stones, and burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the Lord was turned from the fierceness of his anger.*" Should we not worship this God in spirit and in truth! Yet, it is truly astonishing, the things that Joshua did and the stoneheaps that he reared which remain until this day.

But General Joshua's masterstroke is recorded in (Chap. x,) "*The City of Gibeon was a great city, and all the men thereof were mighty.*" Now it will be necessary in order to give you a fair understanding of Joshua's red letter day to give you a sketch from the preceding chapter (ix.). The fame of Joshua and God spread abroad all over the land, in consequence of these mighty exploits that had already been done; the different tribes took different views of the situation; but the inhabitants of Gibeon a mighty city concluded to resort to stratagem, for the sake of their lives. So they dis-

guised themselves to look exceedingly travel-worn, with wornout shoes and mouldy bread, and they said to Joshua, "We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us." Joshua's suspicions and inquisitiveness were both played upon; they say to him we are thy servants. J. says, "Who are you and from whence came you?" They repeat the story, and that they have heard of the fame of Joshua and his God, and all they ask is just to be permitted to live and be servants to Israel. There were Gibeon and three lesser cities entered into this scheme. Joshua administered the oath of allegiance and they become slaves to Israel. Joshua discovers this sharp practice inside of three days, but Joshua appears to take no notice of this breach of good behavior on the part of these Gentile tribes, and while God has charged him and all Israel many times, with all of the pains and penalties attached that in this portion of Canaan there must be nothing left alive that breathes; yet here is this glaring breach to this order which here he permits to pass with his habitual wink. Consider the terrible punishment inflicted upon Achan and all his household for his petty transgression, while Joshua could neglect this duty of such vast and far reaching proportions, of slaying these tribes with the sword—and yet go scott free. In the case of King Saul, where he saved some of the cattle and sheep alive, when he smote the Amelekites from Havilah unto Shur. Saul for placing his judgment before obedience to God, although he declared he had saved these for sacrificial purposes for God himself, but notwithstanding he fell from God's favor lost his kingship his reputation and his life. Well when the neighboring tribes or kingdoms

hear of this alliance of Gibeon with Israel, they also form an alliance and agree upon a plan of procedure, to smite Gibeon. Now here comes in again the mystery of Godliness; despite this flagrant breach of obedience, Gen. Joshua and Gibeon and God unite in giving a day of butchery, that if not the greatest is among the greatest recorded in this bloodstained word of God. This day is specially unique in several respects. See (x. 11-14.) *"And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword."*

(12.) *"Then spoke Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon."*

(13.) *"And the Sun stood still, and the Moon stayed until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day."*

(14.) *"And there was no day like that before it or after it that the Lord hearkened to the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel."*

It seems this account is taken from the Book of Jasher. What has become of the book of Jasher? We would be pleased to know, that we might become better acquainted with the Father God. If he had not have cast down those stones from heaven, and assisted Joshua

in bringing the sun to a stand still this great and glorious victory might not have been won, and this glorious news could not have reached us, which must be such a satisfaction to the believer.

But the victory does not end with these five kings, who made this attack upon Gibeon; these hide themselves in a cave, Joshua orders his men to block them in with stones, and pursue the enemy and make a finish of them, he then returns to this cave brings out those kings, calls the captains, and tells them to put their feet upon their necks to inspire them with courage, and show them what is to be the fate of all whom they might be pleased to annihilate. Then Joshua with Godly satisfaction proceeds to slay them and hang them on five trees. This of itself would look like a big day's doings, even though it were a double length, but Joshua is not satisfied. Just read the account of this ambitious, blood-thirsty Joshua: he conquers seven more kingdoms this same day in rapid succession. Verse forty gives us a fair summary of the account of this day's doing: "*So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south and of the vail, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel commanded.*" We will not stop here to comment any farther than this, any who may doubt this history are referred to the stones at the mouth of this cave where these five kings were mured, for the Bible tells us they remain there "unto this day." There is one thing though I would speak of in this connection, for it appears from the reading of this account that this carnage consisted of Amorites; now these Amorites, it

must be remembered are the descendants of Lot, whom the angel of the Lord found to be the only just man in Sodom.

Did God have this big day in view when he preserved Lot and his daughters, and was he looking ahead to this memorable time and these wonderful happenings with which to embellish his holy word.

The Book of Joshua is the most sanguinary book in the Bible, it contains nothing of any value to my work only as it reveals this God's character perhaps as well as any in the Bible; otherwise I could not wish to take up valuable time with it.

Here is a thing I would call your attention to. Immediately after these terrible slaughters, where whole nations were exterminated, in the next chapter they are all alive again and have got to be all killed over again. For all these victories and exterminations, one cannot but feel an intermingling of doubt and wonder that they won't stay dead. From this account it seems they are all vanquished, and God is congratulating and admonishing them at the same time. (Joshua xxiv. 13-14.) "*And I have given you a land for which ye did not labor, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and olive yards which ye planted not do ye eat. Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in truth.*" Now turn to (Joshua xv. 63.) "*As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.*"

Again, in this same book (xvii. 11 to 13). Here is a whole catalogue of towns: the town of En-dor is in-

cluded, where the witch lived (yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land). Note the remainder of this chapter. The tribe of Joseph complains because they have been given but one lot, and see the promise Joshua makes them for more land: "*But the mountain shall be thine: for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down and the outgoings of it shall be thine; for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites though they have iron chariots and though they be strong.*" Then turn to Judges i. 19: "*And the Lord was with Judah and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron.*"

Again, verse thirty-four, same chapter: "*And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain; for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley.*" Now this is, according to their chronology, twenty-six years after the sun was stayed in his course, and God rained down rocks from heaven until no one would suppose there was an Amorite left alive: yet here, just twenty-six years later, this all seems to be entirely forgotten, and the Amorites are doing up Israel. These are only samples from this Bible, of which there are so many that we can only hope to hit upon a mere fraction.

How appropriate seems the simile that those who believe this Bible to be a revelation from God to class them sheep and those who teach and lead them shepherds; and, dear friends, while you lick this orthodox salt from their hands and eat their theological husks,

you must expect to be shorn by them whenever you have a fleece that offers an attraction.

Just recently I naïvely asked a Methodist minister if he believed the story of Joshua and the sun. After some hesitation he replied that he did not, nor was this story generally believed by the ministry. Now, reader, if this is to be lopped off because it is too absurd, where will this lopping-off process end? You will find it necessary to continue lopping off until the whole Theistic Hypothesis is eliminated, and a new foundation for a faith becomes a stern necessity.

We must now let Joshua rest. He is dead, at least; we have two accounts of it, one in Joshua and one in Judges. This book is replete with internal evidence that it was not written by the one whose name it bears, and that it is a forgery and an imposition. We can never know by whom these books were written, but it is internally evident that the pen has changed hands, God has become uncertain in his movements, his power seems to have greatly abated; his chosen are obliged to capitulate with their enemies, and the enemy seems to be gaining the ascendancy. These chosen seem to be losing faith in their God, with a predominating tendency toward the other tribal gods. And why not? for their God was utterly inadequate to cope with iron chariots. It is clearly in evidence that Israel's God had utterly neglected to urge upon his chosen the necessity of educating themselves in the arts and sciences. See 1 Sam. xiii. 19, 21: "*Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords and spears. But all the Israelites went down to the*

Philistines to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattack. Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the ox-goads." What think ye of the Book of Judges?

While the book of Joshua perhaps takes the cake for rapine and butchery, but for treachery and crime of the most revolting character, and for brutality which appeals to humanity and decency, I think Judges takes the lead, if it were possible to draw the line. I do not wish to take up but very little time with this book, but there are a few things to which I would call your attention. God here seems to have lost his bearings, but not his innate disposition. He wants the sword to still slay, so he incites internecine strife, civil wars right among his chosen. This God seems pleased to have a virgin, an only daughter, sacrificed and made a burnt offering to his glory. See Judges xi. 29 to 31: "*Then the spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah and he passed over Gilead, and Manasseh, and passed Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon. And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.*"

Well, to abbreviate this dismal story: The Lord delivered the children of Ammon into his hands, and he smote twenty cities with a very great slaughter, and the Amorites were again subdued before the children of

Israel. And when Jephthah returned to his house, his only daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and dances. This was his only child. He told her of the vow he had made, with great lamentation, but it had been made to God and could not be revoked. She accepted the sad situation, and only asked a reprieve of two months, in which to bewail her virginity with her companions, and at the end of this time she returns, and her father fulfills his vow. When we read this account, should not our minds revert to the First Commandment, To love the Lord our God with all our mind and with all our strength? You should read this Bible carefully for yourselves. There is so much that furnishes food for thought that I must of necessity pass unnoticed. 'Tis said "The ways of God are past finding out," but it appears there is one of his ways that is apparent he delights in rapine and slaughter to the extent that there is nothing so heinous, dark or cruel that he cannot condescend to do to gratify his nature. While he has been in such close communion all of this time, how much better would this look upon the pages of his book had he have said, Jephthah, forbear! Can there be anything conceived of the orthodox Devil that could beat this story?

In the chapter following (Judges xii.) there is an account of another death harvest, "and there fell at that time forty and two thousand."

Now we are up against (chapter xiii.) where Samson makes his advent and does a few stunts to lead us on in the ways of Godliness. Now I wish to impress upon you to take into consideration the first verse of this chapter: "*And the children of Israel did evil*

again in the sight of the Lord. And the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years."

Is it not strange that these children, with the good moral training that God has given them ever since he discovered Abram in Haran down to this time, that they should still persist in acting naughty and for their evil conduct God is under the painful necessity of passing them over to the Philistines to take another degree in the house of bondage?

CHAPTER XV

This story of Samson, which begins with the thirteenth chapter, I wish to call your attention to, for in this chapter is claimed to be one of the prophecies of Christ. See Matt. ii. 23. Samson is a character much talked of and much preached of. His birth is heralded by an angel, and as he is brought to being for a special mission to free Israel from the yoke of bondage, his is a name of more than ordinary interest. God sends his angel to give this woman "which was barren and bare not" certain directions in regard to food and drink during gestation, and that no razor is to come upon his head or face, after birth. Whether following these directions every time would produce a Samson we cannot say; the Scripture seems to infer as much. The woman, Samson's mother, goes and tells her husband what a wonderful visitor she has had, and what he told her, but she asked him not whence he was, nor did he tell her his name. Verse 7: "*But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive and bare a son; and now*

drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing; for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb, to the day of his death." Here is the point I wish to call your attention to, that is the signification of the word Nazarite. Webster defines it as is here implied, a Jew who bound himself by a vow to purity of life and devotion. It does not seem that Samson cared to adhere to these rules very closely. When we come to examine the prophecies of Christ, I shall need to refer you to this point, and that I am right here I wish to call your attention to this, that there is no analogy between a Nazarite and a Nazarene. See Matt. ii. 23: "*And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.*"

When you look up this reference in the book of Matthew in regard to this prophet and his prophecy, this is just where it lands you here in Judges. You will see that this is torturing the word Nazarite entirely out of its meaning, and is no more a prophecy of Christ than of George Washington. Bear this in mind, because when I come to it I expect to show that this is a fair sample of the much talked of prophecies of Christ.

Now we will trace the career of Samson, because we are told it is God working through him, and this is the all-important thing and the one that should deeply interest us, is to know more of God. Well, Manoah and his wife want the angel to tarry and be refreshed, and also to make a burnt offering to him; but he tells them, though they detain him he would not eat, and that they must make their burnt offering to the Lord. The angel

tarries and they make the offering. In the meantime, they endeavor to find out his name, but he tells them it is a secret. They make the offering upon a rock, the angel takes advantage of the column of smoke, uses it as an elevator, and ascends to heaven. Now, observe, this writer is employing an angel or messenger—Where does this angel come from and to where does he go? is one of the great questions.

Well, this frightens Manoah and his wife fairly out of their wits; they fall on their faces and expect to die, because they think they have seen the Lord. But his wife reasons that if the Lord had been going to slay them he would not have received the burnt offering and told them all of these things. The woman's judgment was good. They did not die—at least, not at this time.

This brings us to verse 24, which says: "*And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew and the Lord blessed him.*" Verse 25: "*And the spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan.*" Now, what do we suppose is meant by this? The spirit of the Lord began to move him at times. Now, I will tell you what I think. You are none of you bound by my opinion, but from my viewpoint I have no doubt but the personage Samson was none other than a witch, or one which was controlled by a familiar spirit, and this it was that moved him at times; that he really and truly belonged to the class that God once said must not be suffered to live; and by the aid, or through this familiar spirit, he did things not understood by the people of his time or age, and was considered by them a man of God, and all of this myth and legend has attached itself to his

name, and comes down to us as a part of the infallible word of God. Bear this in mind and keep this clew, for in time you may better understand.

Here is a brief synopsis of Samson's career, beginning at Judges xiii. 24: "*And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson; and the child grew and the Lord blessed him.*" Verse 25: "*And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan.*" These are the two last verses of this chapter. The first verse of the next, or Judges xiv. 1, reads: "*And Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath, of the daughters of the Philistines.*" What a hotbed plant this Samson is! Here is included in these two short verses his history to manhood as we here find him with matrimonial aspirations.

He falls in love with this heathen woman at first sight, and desires his pa and ma to get her for him. They remonstrate with him for wishing a wife from among the uncircumcised Philistines. We are given to understand that his parents are ignorant of the wonderful, deep-laid plan of God in procuring through him Israel's freedom from these heathen Philistines. Just observe to what extent we are to understand from the account he does it.

Well, Samson, his father and mother go down to Timnath to secure this girl; on their way, Samson seems to be wandering alone, and a lion roars against him. Samson proceeds to take Mr. Lion by the jaws and rends him as he would a kid; he does not think this worth speaking of, but after a time he returns to Timnath to take this woman unto himself, and turns aside to see what had become of and how this dead lion is

getting along; he finds bees and much honey in his carcass. He procures a quantity of this honey and goes on eating it until he comes up to his father and mother, and he gives them, and they also eat; but Samson kept the secret.

Well, it came to pass at Samson's wedding feast that he propounds this riddle, with this injunction, that if they make correct answer within seven days he is to give them thirty sheets and thirty change of garments, while, on the other hand, if they fail, they are to give the same to him.

Here is the riddle: Out of the eater came forth meat and out of the strong came forth sweetness. Well, now the mystery of Godliness begins to manifest in Samson's taking a Philistiness for a wife. She weeps upon his neck until he tells her the secret; then she tells it to these, their Philistine guests. They come to him before the time limit with the answer: "*What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion?*"

Here is where the unfathomable wisdom and goodness of God comes in. Judges xiv. 19: "*And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelan, and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoil, and gave change of garments unto them which expounded the riddle. And his anger was kindled, and he went to his father's house.*" Verse 20: "*But Samson's wife was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.*" To what extent are we to suppose this maneuver can free Israel from the yoke of bondage? I would ask. And what does this drivel remind one of? It sounds like a nursery story, and

is on a par with the story of Jack and the beanstalk or of Cinderella and the glass slipper, and was likely used as such in the land of its nativity, before it found its way into the Bible and is offered now as the infallible word of God. The story of the foxes and the Philistines' corn; his capture and his breaking the thongs with which he was bound; his killing a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass; his becoming athirst and his cry to God for fear of falling into the hands of the uncircumcised; God's making this same jawbone to yield good and wholesome water; Samson's spying out a harlot at Gaza; his lodging with her till midnight, his enemies laying in wait for him; his rising at midnight and carrying away the gates of this city; his wooing and marrying again another Philistine woman whose name was Delilah; her duplicity and treachery after she had got on to the secret of his strength; the plan for getting him shorn; his capture; his being made blind; his imprisonment; their hilarity in anticipation of the sport Samson was going to make for them while he was grinding in the prison; the lad that had charge of this poor blind wreck, and was leading him by a string; the roof of this temple where this festivity was held, crowded with Philistines; Samson desiring to be led to the two main pillars; his bowing himself against them and thereby causing the collapse of the whole of this vast edifice, with 3000 Philies who are in and on this structure and are all killed, and Samson with the rest;—looks as if this Nicene Council, and all other councils that have had authority in accepting or rejecting the material of which this Bible is composed, had a credulity tremendously out of pro-

portion to their reason, their common sense and judgment; and all the more so does it look, of those who profess to believe it at the present day. This story of Samson is so extremely silly, and yet it is as rational as any up to this point, but for silly drivél I think this account stands a trifle ahead. There is not one thing to be gleaned from this story of Samson but the weakness of mankind upon this God question—and this can as truly be said upon all we have yet been over. The Israelites, 'tis said at the beginning of this story, had sinned again, and had passed into captivity to the Philistines for forty years—as long as they were in the wilderness. All of this great splurge about Samson to procure their freedom and not one thing to show that he did one thing toward it! It does not seem that it need be necessary to spend time trying to impress you that such drivél as this is not a revelation from God! If anyone should write such trash as this now, none would think of calling it anything but tommyrot: then, what in the name of reason can be offered to justify the belief that stuff like this can be a revelation from the Infinite God? Can the lapse of time, or translating it from dead languages, and proclaiming it from the pulpit, and the credulity of ignorance make it true? My answer is, No; never. And how can there be pleasure in believing it true? I would ask. The saddest thing that could befall me, were the impossible to take place, would be to believe this Bible true, and that the Almighty, Infinite God is what he is represented therein to be. I may have said this before, but this is one of the things I wish to repeat. For were this so, I could but exclaim with the poet:

If all our hopes and all our fears
 Were prisoned in life's narrow bound;
 If, travelers through this vale of tears;
 We saw no better world beyond;
 "Oh, what could check the rising sigh;
 What earthly thing could comfort give?
 Oh, who then would wish to die?
 Oh, who could then endure to live?"

It would seem as though somewhere throughout this Old Testament Scripture, as much as there is of it, that there might be something that could be read in regard to this God's dealings with mankind without harrowing up one's feelings; something that is not a travesty upon humanity and decency; but, my friends, I have searched this Old Scripture diligently, but fail to find one sentence that justifies the Ecclesiast in saying, "That God is Love." - But, on the other hand, he seems to take delight in inciting murder, war, lechery, rapine and gloom. And this is the Christian's Father God.

If you think I have overstated this and am perverting the Scripture, please read chapter xix. of this book Judges; then consider it, take advice, and speak your minds. Then it might be well for you to read the next chapter following, and then the next, which concludes this book, that you may see what a conscienceless, characterless, vacillating God is this of Israel's.

The next book in order is the book of Ruth. This book contains but four chapters. There is nothing from which we can draw the least inference as to who wrote this silly, bungling story about a strolling country girl creeping slyly into bed with her cousin Boaz.

The only reason I can assign for incorporating this story into the word of God is that, in consequence of

this expression of love upon the part of Ruth, there is an offspring brought into being whom they name Obed, who, according to this account, is the grandfather of David, whose lineage the Bible-makers claim to trace down to Christ.

This book of Ruth takes due pains to show this up. See Ruth iv. 17. Has not the believer good reason to be proud of their Saviour's ancestral line. This book, however, is unlike the preceding ones, as it is free from murder and rapine, and is, in consequence, one of the best books in the Old Testament.

We now come to the books of Samuel. It is certainly impressive that every time, or nearly so, that we are to be furnished a great Bible character or man of God, he is to be the progeny of a woman that is barren, and that there need be godly interference in order that she may reproduce. This is the case, as you may see, with the mother of Samuel, Hannah. Who wrote the books of Samuel? This is a thing we never may know. It was once taught that the names that these books bear were the authors of these books; but this is entirely ungrounded, and I do not think that any student of to-day would claim any such thing, were he a believer or not. The proof to the contrary is too great. This child Samuel, after he was weaned, was given to the Lord, or, in other words, to Eli the Priest. Eli's sons were sons of Belial, which means they had no faith or belief or fear of Israel's God. This, it seems, might exert a derogatory influence, but we will let this pass. Now, these books of Samuel are valuable on the side of spiritual truth, or, in other words, to prove the antiquity of Spiritualism, and to aid the searcher

after knowledge in getting this great and all-important truth out of its unpopular condition and entanglements, into which it has descended by long established errors. But while they contain proof, they also contain a vast amount which must be rejected as sacerdotal rubbish, and it is difficult to dissect out that which will be of use, it is so bracketed into that which is worthless. The worthless in these books we will not spend much time upon; we have been dealing on this side of the proposition pretty much entirely up to this time, and now we will give our attention for a little while to this, the other side. See 1 Sam. iii. 1: "*And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision.*" If you will read this chapter carefully, you will see that Samuel was none other than one who conversed with "familiar spirits," and was therefore a witch, or what is termed in modern times a spirit medium, and that this voice that Samuel heard calling him was no more of a God than any spirit entity who in our day may wish to communicate to those in earth-life.

This spirit wanted to convey to Eli this message: That Israel was going to meet with defeat, by the Philistines, and his two sons would be slain. Things similar to this are of common occurrence, of things about to happen, within the ranks of Spiritualism in our day and time, and are not believed by the Christian world; but the glamor by which time has encircled this, and that it is God who has spoken, makes this true, while present-day communication is either the Devil, or we are deceived, or it is downright falsehood. This power

that Samuel had is identical with that of the witch, only if it has the arm of the priesthood thrown around it, he is a prophet, and if not within the pale of the Jewish priesthood, he or she is a witch, and must suffer their common fate.

Now this Scripture, beginning with Samuel, reads more natural, and though steeped in superstition and legend, but think there may be a trace of truth in the historical record; we can only be guided by judgment. There may have been this man by the name of Samuel, but whether fiction or not, the writer of these two books had some knowledge of spiritual manifestation and follows it out in pretty fair shape, considering to what extent it may have been distorted in making the innumerable translations through which it has passed. Just what this Ark was like, we cannot tell. It seems to have been a fetish or talisman around which much superstition had attached.

Some think, and perhaps this may be so, that it was a chest or kind of cabinet and was magnetized by spirit power, and that their God manifested and communicated by means of this; it may be true to an extent. But as I have said, it is impossible to sift the truth from the immense aggregation of error. But we have got data sufficient to our needs, without trying to determine just how much truth there is in the book of Genesis.

It seems that Samuel was *en rapport* with some tutelar or control that had been running Israel and had given her some mighty hard runs—so hard, that they had become tired of it, and had come to the conclusion that they had rather have a king like other nations

round about them. This displeased Samuel, and displeased this control as well.

See 1 Sam. viii. 6 to 8: "*But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said give us a King to judge us. (And Samuel consults his control.) And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.*" Verse 9: "*Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.*" Then Samuel goes before the people again and tells them that when they get their king, he will be one of the worst of tyrants, that he will enslave their children, and tax them until they would rue the change. Nevertheless, they refused to obey the voice of Samuel and said, Nay, but we will have a king. "*Then the Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice and make them a king.*"

Now, reader, if you will put in place of this God an excarnate entity, one who has no qualms of conscience, neither in regard to truth or humanity: an entity who has been an inhabitant of this earth, and has been a warrior of the most brutal type, even in those ancient days; one that was earth-bound and delighted in carnage, and had made no progress morally; substitute an entity of this description in place of what theology tells us is the true and living God; then consider the infinite as much above such conduct as the noonday sun is above or transcends a glow-worm, and you have this problem in a shape that is reducible.

Now, in the light of Modern Spiritualism, this is a

perfectly rational conclusion and the only one that will square with the conditions. This gives the Bible to Spiritualists and thereby makes it a valuable book of reference. Now, opponents may exclaim, and vituperate, and say what they may, but this solution you will find, the more you investigate, the more rational it will appear.

Of course, accepting this theory does not make these old traditions and horrifying Bible stories any more true; it simply enables us to emancipate ourselves from the bondage of slavish credulity and ignorance, and to trace this thread, which may sometimes be found upon the positive side and sometimes upon the negative side, but is traceable, and the analogy is palpable and provable between present-day knowledge and what may be gleaned from remote antiquity that Spiritualism is as old as man himself.

CHAPTER XVI

Now this God did not wish to take a second-hand place in running the affairs of Israel, so he tries to scare the people out of this plan by making them believe that he is going to place a terrible king over them; but when he finds this fails, then he searches out the best man he can find, in his judgment, in all Israel. See 1 Sam. ix. 1, 2: "*Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zerar, a mighty man of power. And he had a son whose name was Saul, a choice young man and a goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel*

a goodlier person than he; from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people." Well, this young man God selects for Israel's first king. You see from this how uncertain is this God in regard to what he says: he promises the very worst type of a king, and then proceeds to select what he thinks the best. Now, contained in the 1 Sam. ix. and x., which you should read carefully, for here is a lesson which substantiates my claim perhaps as well as any contained in the Old Testament Scripture. Saul's father loses some asses; he tells Saul to take a servant and go in pursuit of them. Well, Saul and this servant search over a large scope, but do not find them. "*And when they were come to the land of Zulph, Saul thought they had best return, for their people would be more concerned for them than for the asses. This servant said to Saul, Behold, now there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honorable man; all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; peradventure he can show us our way that we should go.*"

They talk the matter over; that they have nothing with them to pay for a sitting with this man of God. But the servant searches himself and finds the fourth part of a shekel, and thinks this man might tell them where the asses were for this money. Verse 10: "*Then said Saul to his servant, Well said: come, let us go. So they went to the city where the man of God was.*"

As they approached the city they saw young maidens drawing water; they made inquiry of them. They told Saul that he had just came and was right there on the ground. So they went into the city, and came right against this sought-for man of God, Samuel, as he was

on his way up to the high place. Observe verse 15: *"Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying, To-morrow about this time, I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him King that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people because their cry is come unto me."* Verse 17: *"And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of. This same shall rule over my people."*

Now, is it rational to believe that the Infinite could condescend to affairs like this, and make such missteps and blunders and be obliged to rearrange and reconstruct his plans only to fail again and again, as the whole history shows throughout?

But put this thing the other way, and postulate in place of God a spirit entity with an intelligence at par with mortals at that time; then free your mind of the error of a fixed heaven and a high-walled hell, then assume that both good and bad can, under favorable conditions, communicate to those in the mortal, and the Bible is not so hard a problem. You can then see where Ancient Spiritualism has left its trace, and where ancient priestcraft has left its trail.

Let us return again to Saul, verse 18: *"Then Saul drew near to Samuel at the gate, and said: Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is. And Samuel answered Saul and said, I am the Seer; go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me to-day and to-morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart."* Verse 20: *"And as for thine asses that were lost three days ago, set not thy mind*

on them: for they are found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee, and on all thy father's house?"

Here is a clean-cut case of telepathy and clairvoyance. This medium Samuel seems to have been in possession of several phases of mediumship. Saul did not know what to make of all this, and began to plead that he was only a common man, that he was only a Benjaminite, and that they were the least among the tribes of Israel, and his father the least among them: and was therefore unworthy such adulation, and makes Saul feel somewhat embarrassed. But Samuel takes them right into his best room, gives them his best chairs, among about thirty guests that are bidden. Well, Saul and this servant were entertained in great shape, and in the morning Samuel called Saul in good season and accompanied him down one of the streets of the city, and asks Saul to bid the servant to pass on before them, as he has a communication from this God that he wishes to give Saul. See 1 Sam. x. 1.

Then Samuel anoints Saul King of Israel, and gives him a prediction of the events that are to take place with him during the day as he journeys home. Please read this account, as I cannot take up the time here to give it in full. It says when he reaches a certain place where there were a garrison of Philistines, that he would meet a company of prophets (musicians are here called prophets), with a psaltery, a tabret, a pipe and a harp before them, and they shall prophesy (play upon these instruments). "*And the spirit of the Lord will come upon thee and thou shalt prophesy with them and shall be turned into another man.*"

Well, this prediction is said to have been fulfilled to the letter.

It is apparent that what is meant by prophesying in this case is playing upon these instruments and singing; and that Saul was to be controlled by a spirit entity that understood music, and he was going to sing or play with them. It appears from the surprise expressed by those who knew Saul that he had no knowledge of music, and when they saw him playing in this manner they expressed astonishment and exclaimed, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" All of these things which are said to have taken place between Samuel and Saul at this time are a very common type of spiritual manifestation in our day, as can be proved by those who may wish to know. We will not need to follow this medium or man of God, Samuel, any farther at this time. This account of Samuel and Saul is valuable in that it shows that Spiritualism is of great antiquity and that these manifestations parallel those of the present day, so there need be no mistake, and if Spiritualism was true then, upon what ground and why should we reject it now? Or why should we wish to?

Several years ago I was working with a young man. He made no profession to any belief that I knew of in regard to any religion. He had some relatives in the western part of this State (New York), which he went to visit when he was a young boy. And when there he went with some of his friends to a spiritualist camp-meeting at Lily Dale. He was at this camp but one day, and yet he seemed to have learned enough in this short time to discover that Samuel was a spirit medium. A number of years after, when he was mar-

ried and was the father of several children, it happened that he had attended Sunday school and the subject had been "Samuel and Saul"; and the following Monday he turned to me and said: "Samuel of the Bible was just a spirit medium, wasn't he?" I had been studying this subject but a short time, but was impressed to see how apparent this history of Samuel and modern Spiritualism is to the casual observer.

Well, Saul ascended to the throne of Israel. There is no object in following him closely any farther. It is the same old story again, over and over. Saul did not make the second move before this fastidious God was displeased and was ready to throw him overboard and put another in his stead. See 1 Sam. xiii. 5: "*And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the seashore in multitude. When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait—for the people were distressed—then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits.*" They skidooed in every direction. "*As for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal and all the people followed him trembling.*" Well, Samuel had gotten Saul into this job of being King, and Samuel's appointed time to be at Gilgal had arrived, but no Samuel. So Saul concludes the best thing he can do is to make a burnt offering to God, to be followed with prayer or supplication. After a time Samuel appears upon the scene and asks Saul, "What hast thou done?" Saul tells him the situation, and thought the best thing he could do under the circumstances was to make a burnt

offering and supplication. 1 Sam. xiii. 13: "*And Samuel said unto Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue.*"

God is now ready to turn Saul down: and for what reason? The only reason that Reason can ascribe is because Saul offered sacrifice and put up a prayer to this God in this terrible emergency. Let us just consider Saul's show for victory. Saul, the account says, had an army of three thousand. The Philistines' force consisted of thirty thousand chariots, six thousand horsemen, and footmen which were as the sands on the seashore. The men of Israel had no courage for battle and fled; what better could they do? See verse 19: "*Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: (observe) for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords and spears.*"

The Israelites were wholly dependent upon the Philistines, their enemies, for everything, both implements of war and agriculture that were made in iron.

The story of Joshua's staying the sun and of God raining rocks upon the enemy, seems to have wholly lost its force and to be wholly forgotten by both Jew and Gentile. Verse 22: "*So it came to pass in the day of battle that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan.*"

There is no object in following this account any farther here. It runs too wild to be of any value to the one who may wish to believe or to those who find com-

fort in not believing. It proves this God of Israel so fickle, so unreliable; but to be brief, it is the same old story over again.

The object in making this selection, and the object lesson to be drawn therefrom, is that the only reason discernible for Saul's falling from God's grace is that in this dilemma he offers up a sincere, heartfelt prayer to this God. If anyone can explain it otherwise, I would be pleased to hear from them.

We will now turn to 1 Sam. xxviii. In this chapter is an account of what in modern parlance is called a seance given on the negative, or what orthodoxy would call the evil side of the proposition: and instead of this being given through a man of God, this is through a woman which the catechism instructs us is of the Devil. But let us do just a little independent thinking for ourselves, even if it is contrary to churchanity. The world cannot advance without some independent thought.

The beginning of this chapter is the same old story, only instead of Israel leaving nothing alive that breathed, the Philistines are the aggressors and don't seem to take—come to get right down to business—any stock in the old scarecrows of the Red Sea and Moses' Rod, Joshua's Sun, and God's Rocks, and all that: It is evident that God is becoming puerile, is losing his force as all who read can see. His power consisted in legendary lore and this was fast losing its force. And right here the Philistines had gathered their armies together—so unlike the inhabitants of Gibeon—for warfare to fight Israel.

Verse three, "*Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel*

had lamented him. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards out of the land."

Now I must break in upon my story for a short space, that we may catch a glimpse, that we may form a faint idea of the damnableness in the application and execution or enforcement of this God's Law, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Just this one thing if there were nothing more, no other charge, this is sufficient to condemn this God and relegate him to the cemetery where the Pagan gods of Egypt, Rome and Greece have been interred. Just think an allwise God even if there were witches and these witches were mean to make an edict that certain individuals within the realm are to be informed against and killed! And for what, because they have a gift or quality not common to all. Mr. God who made the witches and all the rest of creation that you seem pleased to have so brutishly exterminated? Just consider what poor deluded Saul did here, where it says he had put away the witches and those that had familiar spirits. It means that there had been committed a deliberate cold blooded, wholesale murder of innocent people in the execution of this God's Law.

Just contemplate this one instance, and then consider the hundreds of hellish deeds of this character that have been enacted, where God's law gave opportunity for one to inform against another whether in regard to religion or malice or selfish designs to get someone out of the way; all that needs be is to procure a prescription inform against him and have him removed, put to death for the glory of God. We know the depravity to which man can descend in our day and

time. Did God know or consider the cursed advantage that could be taken by depraved, dissolute man; in consequence of such a God-given law?

Can we ever duly appreciate what has been done for the world by those great and good men, who in the struggle for freedom, have not believed?

On the other hand can we contemplate or realize the condition into which we would descend, could Priestcraft and Ecclesiasticism have carried out their designs and plans unchecked?

Now to our Bible lesson, 1 Sam. xxviii. 5-6-7, "*And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.*"

"*Then said Saul unto his servants seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor.*

"*And Saul disguised himself and put on other raiment, and went and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: And he said I pray thee, divine unto me by thy familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee.*"

Verse nine, observe what the woman said: "*The woman said unto him, Behold thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?*"

"*And Saul swore to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.*"

“Then said the woman whom shalt I bring up unto thee? And he said bring me up Samuel.

“And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice; and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.

“And the king said unto her, Be not afraid; for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw God ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her what form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed himself.”

(15.) *“And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams; therefore I have called thee that thou mayest make known to me what I shall do. Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? And the Lord hath done to him as he spoke by me: for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbor, even to David: Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amelek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines; and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines. Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of*

the words of Samuel; and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night. (21.) "And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me. (22.) "Now therefore I pray thee hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat that thou mayest have strength when thou goest on thy way. (23.) "But he refused and said I will not eat. But his servants together with the woman compelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he rose from the earth and sat upon the bed. (24.) "And the woman had a fat calf in the house; and she hasted, and killed it, and took flour and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened bread thereof. (25.) "And she brought it before Saul and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up and went away that night."

I have here made a quotation of considerable length from the Scripture; because I consider here is altogether the most valuable lesson taught in the Bible. In fact there are several important lessons embodied in this selection, which I will now aim to briefly call your attention to.

First—When Saul saw the host of the Philistines he was afraid and his heart greatly trembled! How could it have been otherwise, when the Iron trust was controlled absolutely by the Philistines, and Israel could not so much as manufacture an ox-goad! Is not this a pretty story to offer to the little boy and girl at

Sunday-school and to the heathen as well, that this Bible God is the greatest God there is, and that he has chosen Israel to give especial care and training in the ways of Godliness, and all other nations are to melt away before them, and now see the fix they are in, and see how it has been all of the time since his selection was first made.

It does not look as though Israel could have enjoyed one good night's rest, in all of these weary centuries, I think the way it has turned out with these Jews even down to this time, it would have been far better for Israel, if Abram had have said, when God first proffered his special services. No, I thank you God, but I think I had rather take my chance alone.

I never could see wherein Saul was not as good as the best that have been chosen to lead Israel. But if this God is allwise and knew the end at the beginning, as theology teaches, why did he not select David as King of Israel at first. See 1 Sam. xxxi, what a destruction to life and property to Israel by this mistake of God, as a fulfillment of Samuel's prophecy through this woman of En-dor. It seems at this crisis, when Saul inquired of the Lord the Lord answered him not by any of the means that they had been in the habit of employing.

Now this was not kind of God, nor does it accord with what we are taught in the Catechism "to ask and ye shall receive." Because this was not Saul alone, but all Israel must suffer. It certainly does seem to our finite minds, that God should have said to Saul, Saul I have erred in judgment, in that you were tall, but now you go and tell David to take your place as soon as

possible, and then I will tell him what to do. Saul had offended God once upon a time when things looked dark and the way uncertain, by making a burnt offering and invoking Divine aid with prayer: so in this Saul was barred. None can gainsay but he was in a great strait, and it seems to him, that this is his *dernier resort* to see if possible there was one remaining that had a familiar spirit.

CHAPTER XVII

I did not expect in this part of my work to say anything of Spiritualism: but find it necessary at this time to give a definition or two. Now the great majority of people to-day have but a vague idea of what is meant by a familiar spirit. The impression obtained by Ecclesiasticism, is that such persons are in league with the Devil, or the Power of darkness, and as our Statute law does not permit of having them dispatched, they should be shunned and avoided as bad and dangerous! Now, my friends, this is misleading and wrong. For example, suppose you have a friend here in earth-life that you think much of, and in company with much of the time, and you become familiar with her or him. In this case you would be familiar with each other, there could be nothing evinced here that either of you were bad. And if perchance this friend passes this stage of life, and by a law not generally believed or understood you find that you can still hold converse with this friend, there need be no impropriety in calling him or her your familiar spirit, or need it imply that he or she must needs be bad or evil.

Now to those who believe the Bible, you are forced

to believe that those in the flesh have held communion with those who have lived and passed to another sphere of existence, as in the case of Christ with Peter, James and John, who held converse with Moses and Elias on the mount, and of Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus when he conversed with Christ. There are other cases which might be cited. This woman of En-dor might be included. You do not think these communications from spirits, that were bad. Then I would ask, why are we to believe such things impossible to-day, or that it is of evil.

Now let us consider the character of this woman of En-dor.

When Saul came to her in the night *incognito* with these two, the account shows plainly, that she was in possession of this knowledge, of how the ones of her class had been destroyed throughout all Israel. And when Saul came in disguise, with two, at midnight she could not have a rational hope but that they were seeking to take her life. So when they make their business known, she doubts, and tells them what Saul has done, and that they were laying a snare that she might meet the same fate. But we will not suppose but she was a woman of intelligence and quickly discovered that his trouble was more serious than securing her conviction and death. Saul swears that she shall not be punished for this thing. Then she wanted to know whom he wanted called up. He said bring me up Samuel.

And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice! And asked Saul why he had deceived her! for he was Saul!

Now in the first place what right have we to call this

woman of En-dor a witch. She is not mentioned in the Scripture in a single instance as being any other than a woman. So we will regard her as a woman. It appears that when this woman saw Samuel it was immediately made known to her, that this was Saul. Can we reasonably doubt but this was made known to her by Samuel himself?

But this is not the great question. The great and all absorbing question is, and one that must interest us all, was it Samuel. The Scripture says plainly and pointedly it was Samuel. Nor does it leave us a chance to raise a question. And to take a negative view is to pervert, misconstrue and contradict the Scripture. Again Samuel identifies himself to Saul to that extent, that he is entirely overcome by the proof, and falls prostrate upon the ground, when he Samuel, refers him, to what he had told him before his death: How that God had departed from him. Had rent the kingdom out of his hand and given it to his neighbor, even to David. Another thing which may be offered in evidence, that this was Samuel, that this prophecy spoken through this woman was fulfilled to the letter. Saul and his sons and his whole army were slain on the following day. (See 1 Sam. xxxi.)

But notwithstanding all of the evidence that this was Samuel, Orthodox churchanity is unanimous in its denunciation of this woman, and proclaim from the pulpit and press that she was a witch and in league with Satan, and that Samuel was a hallucination. What earthly right has a Bible believer to lay before his flock such pabulum as this? And if the present-day theologian would wish to impress his followers that

man survives the change called death, why should he wish to pervert this part of the Scripture, relating to the woman of En-dor and Samuel. Again leaving the churches and creeds out of the question, what can there be in this account to which the common worldling should object? Is this a thing to which our minds should revolt, that we are here taught, that though Samuel was what we call dead, that he still lived, and still could be heard from? I can certainly see nothing in this unpleasant to believe, for if Samuel survives this change, there is no reason to assume that this law is not universal, and that we may not all expect a continued existence of life beyond the grave. This I expect to prove.

Now let us consider the character of this woman of En-dor. There is not perhaps a character on the Scriptural record that has been slandered and maligned and misrepresented, and held up as an object of contempt, as has this woman of En-dor. If Saul could have been informed against her, she would have went the way of those whom Saul had put away. But by chance she had been overlooked and is here called upon to act in her capacity under these peculiar conditions, which are enough to stir one's heart to pity. While we are taught by Orthodoxy, that this woman was in league with the Devil, and was producing this hallucination through his Satanic Majesty, let us study her character and see how it compares with the Christian's standard. Christ tells us to love our enemies. This we know is incompatible to human nature: but we can make use of humanity under all circumstances, if we will cultivate and are in possession of it. When this

woman discovers this man to be Saul, and is in full knowledge of the terrible crime he has committed, whether through ignorance or bigotry, this does not mitigate crime nor exonerate the perpetrator from suffering its consequences. This is not what theology teaches to her pupils: but let us reason together. In our Civil Code, among the first lessons is this: "Ignorance of the law excuses no man." This is palpable and plain: because if this were not so this would leave a loophole through which every rogue could crawl. You will find this holds true in regard to natural law as well. You cannot through ignorance put your hand into the fire or drink poison, in short you cannot violate the natural law without suffering the consequence. Then what reason have we to think that we will be immune from punishment if we violate the moral law. Just consider what superstition and ignorance can lead to, and then expect to be ushered through the gates of Paradise. This is a thing, dear friends, that if you have learned you will have to unlearn, and sometimes your ignorance costs you more than I can tell.

When Saul came to this woman, and she saw that he was sore troubled she said unto him, "Behold thine handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and have put my life into my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me." She then insisted that he must have something to eat, as she became informed that he had not eaten anything the day previous nor till then. So she provided the best she had out of pity for this poor wretch, that he might have strength to go his way. Could any follower of the lamb have done more?

This woman acted upon the impulse of her innate

nature. She expected no reward from Israel's God, nor from Saul, unless perchance if he got himself delivered from this immediate trouble, he might then turn his attention to this duty and have her put to death!

Readers, while Priestcraft and Ecclesiasticism can make you believe that this monstrosity held up before you from the pulpit is the highest ruling power, and is the author of this plan of salvation, or what would express it—more properly—I should say—this plan of damnation, because from the account pretty much all seem to be damned. While they can make you believe this, and that this woman of En-dor and the class to which she belongs, and that modern Spiritualism and all it stands for, is of the Devil and must be shunned, as the power that is sure to drag you down to hell! while they can make you believe all this, they are sure to hold their job. This God of the Bible bases his claims of Godship upon his miracles.

Now I will postulate, that there is no God that is not doing business on borrowed capital that need be resorting to and performing these strange freaks to hold his job. As the world advances in knowledge miracles gradually disappear.

If this God in those early days thought miracles so necessary to prove himself, why has he thrown up this plan of procedure? 'Tis evident infidelity is on the increase: that advanced thought and the higher criticism rejects the orthodox claims of the Bible. If these are wrong, and the orthodox claims correct, why should not some beautifully planned miracle be interposed at this juncture by the Almighty in public, and in a way that all who run might read. It would seem that an

allwise God, with this Bible God-given, with such a penalty for unbelief affixed, should blazon high in the vault of heaven these words, or words to this effect and let them remain there till the end of time.

“The Bible is infallible.” A miracle like this would be a revelation: while the miracles recorded in the Bible are no revelation whatever. They are entirely without authenticity, they are wholly unreasonable; they are not pleasant to believe nor do I believe them. For example, the miracle of the deluge—this you may say was a free public exhibition, but what militates against this is that all of the world were destroyed in the working of this miracle, but Noah and his family, and they may not have been strictly truthful. Then again the Red Sea miracle is beclouded with doubt in the same way: here the Egyptians were all destroyed, and we have only the Israelites for this miracle, and as the Jews are not considered above mediocrity for truth and veracity in our day so why are we bound to believe them then.

A revelation of whatever nature or however wonderful or important to mankind, and then substantiated by a blood-curdling miracle, can be a revelation only to those to whom this revelation and this collateral proof or miracle is given: that is to those who are eye witnesses. To the rest of the world it is only hearsay, and they must use their reason, and good judgment taking all of the probabilities pro and con into consideration whether or not they are justified in believing.

From this definition, and there is no other correct one: this Bible loses its place as a revelation, and simply takes its place as an aggregation of tremen-

dous stories which blind faith tells us we must believe.

Now let me ask blind faith to just sit up for a little time and take notice of a few things.

I would here call your attention to two miracles that you may see how conditions are changed to make them fit the miracle.

Now when Israel declared for a king, God was displeased, and jealous because he thought he had done some good strokes of management, and he complained to Samuel: but finally a compromise was agreed upon. See 1 Sam. xii. 14-16, "*If ye will fear the Lord and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord; Then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the Lord your God. But if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord; then shall the hand of the Lord be against you as it was against your fathers. Now therefore stand and see the great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes.*"

Now Samuel calls their attention to the fact that it is time of wheat harvest. This is represented as being a rainless period. So that a thunder storm at this time would pass for a very impressive miracle, especially if it came at Samuel's call. (18.) "*So Samuel called unto the Lord and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day; and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.*"

God's happiest moments seem to be when he has his chosen trembling with fear.

Now here is recorded another miracle which makes

this above named one void, and of no effect or if the one is true the other must be from the conditions false and for my part I joyfully-reject them both.

In order to have a miracle wrought when the children of Israel crossed the Jordan, it is necessary to have a flood in the river, if it was as dry as Samuel represents it to be at the time of harvest they could have walked over on the stones without wetting their feet.

But here to have a miracle sufficient for the people's needs, it becomes necessary to have a flood in the Jordan at the time of harvest. See Joshua iii. 15, "*And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest.*"

So you see in this case there must needs have been copious rains in time of harvest to have the River Jordan overflowing its banks. (17.) "*And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground.*"

Dear friends if this Bible is true and these miracles all facts, we might as well prepare for the worst: because if we should reach heaven, a few of us with this fickle God to serve and please we could not count on it with any degree of certainty, and our minds would be in a constant state of unrest, for our heaven would be at any time liable to turn out like the great promise made to Israel in the wilderness when he sent the quails.

No dear reader, the Infinite does not deal in miracles. His law is immutable, unchangeable; we can count on the sun's rising at his appointed time, and it will never

be stayed in its course, for one race to annihilate another—Had the Bible makers have had a better knowledge of astronomy, they could have presented this miracle in better shape, for the present age, by saying that the earth was stopped in its diurnal revolution, instead of staying the sun. I do not pretend but there is phenomena which to those not having a proper knowledge might ascribe to miracle, but this is the working out of natural law which in time we hope will be better understood.

It does not seem as if the Bible needed any more bombarding to relegate it where it belongs in the mind of intelligent mankind. But you have so long been taught to believe that deftly hidden in this Old Testament Scripture, or the Jews' Bible are the prophecies and promises, that point out unmistakably the Christ of the New Testament that was to come. And here is where the greatest deception lies. David is also held up as being a man after God's own heart, and immaculate in every particular except in the matter of Uriah.

Now I expect to prove that these books called prophecies have no more reference or thought of the Christ of the New Testament, than they do of Washington or Lincoln. But there are a few things I yet wish to say that properly precede the prophecies.

We will now make a brief examination of David's record. David at any later period of the world than that of Bible making, would be called a usurper. But we will let this pass. The thing about David that makes him particularly interesting to our work, is that Christ, the Savior of mankind is "born of David's line," as

the beautiful Christmas carol puts it, and we have all been told and taught much about Christ being of the lineage of Jesse and David. But when the Papal Priesthood put her loving arms around Christianity, Jesse and David were knocked clean out of the reckoning: because it then became necessary that Christ become sired by the Holy Ghost—one of the Holy Trinity—and as they do not pretend to claim that the virgin Mary was in any way closely related to David, and as the Jews had practiced marrying in other tribes continually—though God forbade it—and as they had practiced taking captive maidens from the time they were in the wilderness, down to the time of the Babylonish Captivity for their own use, I do not see how there can be any propinquity of relationship or how we can hope that Christ can have much of Abraham's or David's blood in his veins.

But despite these glaring facts the vicar will continue to impress us that David is Christ's grandfather!

Predicating this to be a fact let us take a cursory survey of some of the salient points in David's history. David did not belong to the school of St. Paul, he did not believe in celibacy, he wanted a few wives, and we will discover the means he employed to secure some of them. David was drawn by the law of affinity toward Saul's daughters, notwithstanding Saul had drove a javelin at him several times with intent to kill, still he loved Saul's daughters. The eldest had been promised to David, but he was disappointed in this love affair for she was given to another.

But Michal, Saul's second daughter, loved David,

and David embraces this opportunity—and Michal also we have a right to assume—and the terms of negotiation were arranged with Saul. Saul requires from David's hand, one hundred foreskins of the Philistines. See 1 Sam. xviii. 27, Wherefore David arose and went he and his men and slew of the Philistines; and David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king's son-in-law. And Saul gave him, Michal, his daughter to wife.

Should we not strain things to make it appear that David and Christ are kin?

Now observe the manner in which David secures wife No. 2. See 1 Sam. xxv. It should be remembered that David was in hiding at this time, for Saul's anger had reached the murder point, because the women danced and sung. "*Saul hath slain his thousands, but David hath slain his ten thousands,*" and this chapter finds him down in the wilderness of Paran.

There was a man whose possessions were in Carmel. This man, we infer from the account, was a man of business, he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. It was at the time of sheep-shearing. This man's name was Nabal. David was short of rations and sends ten young men to commune with Nabal, and make it appear that David and his force had been extra good, in that they had not plundered his flocks, and now David wanted pay in provisions and supplies, as a reward of merit. Nabal answers in a rather off-hand manner, that he knew nothing of David nor had he heard of his good behavior: that it was common for servants to break away from their masters and make great pretentions, and that he hardly thought he was

under obligations to give what he had provided for his shearers to David and his men.

Now it is apparent to anyone reading this account that Nabal made just the reply that David wanted. This gave David a pretext to plunder his herds and assassinate Nabal and his men. This Nabal had a wife by the name of Abigail 3, she was a woman of good understanding and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings and he was of the house of Calib. So you see this was no Philistine that David had these designs upon, Calib was one of the twain who went arm in arm with Joshua, whose integrity of heart and righteousness before God permitted him to endure from the transit of the Red Sea through all of the vicissitudes of the wilderness to the promised land. But see 12-13, (So David's young men turned their way and went again, and came and told him all those sayings. And David said unto his men, gird ye on every man his sword; and they girded on every man his sword; and David girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred, and two hundred abode with the stuff. While David was mobilizing his force to appropriate Nabal's live stock and put Nabal and his shearers at rest; Abigail was informed of the answer that Nabal—her husband—had made, and with womanly sagacity made acute by the customs of the age, prepared a goodly present and apprehended David at the head of his army, and framed the best apology that the circumstances would admit of, and by womanly tact and good judgment she dissuaded David from carrying out his designs.

CHAPTER XVIII

David then said to Abigail. See 32-34, "*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel which sent thee this day to meet me. For in very deed as the Lord, God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me.*" Surely there had not been unto Nabal anything by the morning light, anything alive is what is meant. We cannot use the language that is here used. David received her present and returned to headquarters, and Abigail returned home, and found Nabal her husband holding high carnival and was excessively drunk; so drunk that she did not deem it prudent to inform him that night, but when morning came she informed him of what his household had escaped by her intervention, the shock seems to have produced apoplexy or paralysis or something of that nature, so that life exterminated at the expiration of about ten days.

David was quick to discover that God has wrought this all for his glory, and beautiful Abigail was at once uppermost in his mind. Ambassadors were at once dispatched to inform her of her good fortune and Abigail jumps into the chance you bet. Here is the Bible for it. (41.) "*And she arose, and bowed herself on her face to the earth, and said, Behold let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord. And Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of her's that went after her; and she went after the messengers of David and became his wife.*"

Now, dear friends, please lay aside the glamor by

which time encircles this history and the halo of sanctity, and consider this an occurrence of to-day, and ask yourself, Is there joy and comfort in the belief, That David is Christ's grandfather.

In verse forty-three of this same chapter xxv, is the account of his marrying wife No. 3. She must have been one of Abigail's damsels; the Scripture does not make it plain.

The position that David has always held in Christendom, makes it necessary to give this character a somewhat fair "*expose*" so will invite your attention to some history recorded in 1 Sam. xxviii. Now it would look as though the old animosity of Saul toward David was healed in the account of the preceding chapter where it was made so plain to Saul that his son-in-law David had had a most favorable opportunity of killing him when he was asleep in the trench with his spear stuck in the ground close to his bolster; and David had carried away his spear without farther harm to Saul, while Saul had drove his javelin at David upon several occasions, with murder outlined upon his countenance, and David had resisted from retaliation although he had held several most favorable opportunities; this we are not taught was from any love David had for Saul, but from the fact that Saul is God's anointed.

When all this comes home to Saul, he expresses his gratitude, and promises that hostilities shall cease. See 1 Sam. xxvi. 21, "*Then, said Saul, I have sinned; return my son David, for I will no more do thee harm; because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day; behold I have played the fool and have erred exceedingly.*"

While Saul was projecting his javelin at him with all the force he could muster, David seems to rather enjoy dodging, and maneuvering in his cunning way, to prove to Saul what advantages he had held, and still withheld; but when Saul makes his apology and declares that the feud is at an end; then it is that David's suspicions are aroused to the point of absconding. Where does he go? He moves with his six hundred men and his two last acquired wives—Michal, his first wife, Saul had recalled and given to Phalti, the son of Laish, so she was not with him for a time—into the coasts of the Philistines, Israel's dead-list enemy. David holds a parley with Achish the king, makes oath of allegiance to the Philistines, and sues the king for a town in his kingdom wherein to dwell. Achish cedes to him Ziklag, that day. Note verse six, "*Wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the Kings of Judah unto this day.*" Reader just consider who is writing this Scripture, and where this oft repeated expression "unto this day" is supposed to carry us to?

Let us see what David's first performance is, in this his last settlement. He dwells among the Philistines one year and four months. He plans a raid among some tribes said to be old inhabitants of the land among them the Amelekites. (9.) "*And he and his men smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish.*"

David does just what Saul did, for which Saul lost prestige with God, in keeping the sheep and cattle alive and possessing them; but in this case God seems

well pleased. Sagacious David kills every man, woman and child, so they cannot inform against him.

The king asks David whether he had made a road that day. Quick witted David tells him against the South of Judah and some other tribes of the family of Israel.

Here this man David, in whom God takes supreme delight—except in the little matter of Uriah the Hittite—has committed one of the most dastardly deeds that a totally depraved barbarian could commit, and lies to Achish the king with all the effrontery of a bronze statue. Achish believes David and is well pleased, and thinks that David has previously made Israel to utterly abhor him, and will therefore be a valuable acquisition to him forever.

Please note this carefully because it is David's character we are after now. It would seem as though this were already enough, but he has been extolled for about three thousand years as being perfect—with but one flaw—and the best among the God-fearing men in the vista of Messianic genealogy, and it behooves to go a little slow, that we may somewhat understand. We can only give a summary of the salient points, there is too much to give in full detail. Read your Bible.

We will now turn to where David is made king of Israel. You should read this history, there are so many things that I must of necessity omit, however much I may wish to dilate upon them.

After Saul's death there comes a messenger to inform David at Ziklag in the country of the Philistines. Here are two different stories relating how Saul came to his end. In the last chapter of (1 Sam.) it says

Saul purposely fell upon his own sword to avoid falling into the hands of the uncircumcised Philistines. This messenger tells David that he happened by chance upon Mount Gilboa, that Saul had leaned upon his spear, but it had not been effectual and he, Saul, asked this messenger who he was, he told him he was an Amelekite, but Saul implored him to finish the work, which the messenger owns he did. When this messenger tells all to David, David discovers a sin in this Amelekite for killing the Lord's anointed, and tells one of his young men to fall upon him and he smote him that he died.

Now we will turn to 2 Sam. v. 13. The reader will observe that Samuel's death is recorded in 1 Sam. xxv. 1, but his pen continues writing right on.

Here in 2 Sam. v. 13, 'tis recorded, "*And David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem after he was come from Hebron,*" but the text does not inform how many.

In verse fourteen of this same chapter is recorded sons which are born to him, and among those named is Solomon. Now Solomon the record says is the son of Bath-sheba, Uriah's wife, and the episode or circumstances which brings Solomon into existence has not taken place, nor did it until ten years later according to Biblical chronology. I will call your attention to this a little later.

We will now take a hasty look at a portion of the Scripture recorded in 2 Sam. vi. It seems, the time had arrived for moving the ark of God to the tabernacle where David abode at Jerusalem. He proceeds with a procession of thirty thousand men, all the chosen men of Israel. It does not matter how far this ark is to be

moved, we are not told. They had built them a brand new cart right up-to-date, and were getting along exceedingly. They had a band with all manner of instruments, and David we have a right to infer was leader of this band, but we hardly think he had his harp of solemn sound on this occasion, but from the sequel it seems it would have been better had he have had it. From the account they were playing ragtime and were marching too fast for the safety of the ark on the ox-cart where the road was rough, past Nachon's threshing floor where it seems it came near toppling over, and Uzzah concerned for the safety of this ark of God put forth his hand to steady it, verse seven, "*And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God smote him thus for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.*" Now, dear friends, what manner of a Bible lesson have we here, and how are we to know what may please or displease Israel's God or the Christian's father God?

What in the name of Reason can the theologian discover here to justify an act like this, where one thinks he is doing God's holy will? I have studied the Scripture pretty thoroughly, but have never discovered one word where God has forbidden touching the ark! And to strike Uzzah dead for trying to preserve it from harm, I should say is enough to set a Christian to thinking that there must be a screw loose somewhere in this theological machinery.

It seems that David himself here thinks this God problem a hard one, and he concludes to take time to consider. He is afraid of this mysterious chest himself. So he left it on the road, at the house of a man

by the name of Obed-Edom. It remained there three months, and such a wave of prosperity struck the plantation of Obed-Edom that David concludes, By gracious! he will try and get it into his tabernacle if it is dangerous to handle. "*So David went and brought up the ark of God.*" But there has to be great caution and tact employed at this time to avoid God's displeasure. So after they had moved the ark the first six paces, "David makes an offering of oxen and fatlings." This being done, David concludes that some good dancing may be acceptable to God while this ark is in transit, and David decides to do this himself.

I suppose, readers, we have never seen any right down dancing. The Scripture tells us he danced with all his might: and this was done while he was nude! Picture it: think of it! We are not advised where the rest of David's wives were, but the Scripture tells us (2 Sam. vi. 16), "*And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David,*" Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.

David is so thankful when he gets the ark in place that he shells out some of his spoil. "He gives all Israel a piece of meat, a loaf of bread and a flagon of wine;" this seems to be an uncertain quantity, but we have a right to assume there was bread and meat enough for a square meal, and wine enough to make them all merry.

When he gets through with this donation to his subjects, he turns his attention to his household with showers of blessing. Michal, his first wife, came out

to meet her king and free her mind. Here is the account per Scripture. Verse 20: "*How glorious was the King of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself.*" Verse 21: "*And David said unto Michal, It was before the Lord, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel: therefore will I play before the Lord.*" Verse 22: "*And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them I shall be had in honour.*" Verse 23: "*Therefore Michal had no child unto the day of her death.*"

What better can we say to this than, Great is the mystery of Godliness! Who but godly David could have guessed what was required to keep God in good humor while this ark was being moved! And after studying this Scripture lesson, what argument can the Christian produce derogatory to dancing, even though 'tis done in scant apparel.

Michal, David's first wife, seems to be a woman who lived in advance of the age; she seems to have had the elements of a lady. Is she a pure fiction, or did she have an existence? This is impossible to know. My best judgment is she is a myth. The story of God's judgment for her reproaching David is not worth speaking of; it is too stale. It is internally evident that these books of Samuel are far-fetched and rest on tradition and fable.

This ark, which is represented as a chest in which God was kept, has some resemblance and leads one to

think at times, especially in this case of Uzzah, that it may have been an electric battery. That they had stumbled on to this mysterious, unponderable force or substance, which is so much employed at this time, and so little known of then; that these ancients from certain signs of attraction and repulsion used this for divination and called this God. This being the case Uzzah put his hands upon it where it was not properly insulated and received an overcharge.

The miracles of the Scripture are the easiest part to explain; they properly fall under two heads: (1) Natural law not understood; (2) Munchausen or pure fabrication.

We will now turn the pages of this Bible till we come to 2 Sam. xi. 1: "*And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.*" Here is recorded an incident in David's history that is more closely allied to human nature in modern time than most of the Bible stories.

This chapter starts off in a vague kind of way: but what is meant is that the time had arrived, and David has sent his chieftains and their forces to wage war with most anything they ran against. Everything outside of Israel was a common enemy, and when not, this civil strife filled up the interregnum. David tarries at Jerusalem. It seems David was no exception to the rule, "Uneasy rests the head that wears the crown." And he arose from his bed after retiring, and walked out upon the roof of his house; and from this view-

point he saw a woman washing herself, or, in modern parlance, was taking a sponge bath; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.

David here acts like a man of the world. His thoughts do not in the least seem to be drawn Godward, at least toward any god but the goddess Venus. He sends and makes inquiry after this woman. He finds her to be the wife of one of his private soldiers, Uriah the Hittite. This woman whom David is so drawn toward bears the name of Bathsheba. David, whose word is law, sends messengers to bring her to his house. She has no voice or choice in this matter, no more than though she were a thing devoid of thought.

But in process of time she sends and informs David that she is with child by him. David sends to Joab, his chief in command, and says, "Send to me Uriah the Hittite." Uriah, with mind divided 'twixt hope and fear, approaches this man who rules by right divine. David makes inquiry how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered, what the prospects and probabilities were, and how he thought certain battles might terminate, etc.: questions meant to deceive Uriah, to flatter him and make him think that for some hidden cause he has become a favorite to the King. David then tells him to go to his house, wash his feet and have a good night's rest and visit with his wife, and there followed him a mess of meat from the King. Uriah misunderstands; he feels now that news has reached the King that he is a soldier worthy of promotion; his hopes are high with what has taken place, and now he thinks he must make no mistake to lower his estimation in the appreciation of his King. So Uriah

slept at the door of the King's house with the servants of the King, and went not down to his house. Verse 10: *"And when they had told David, saying Uriah went not down to his house: David said unto Uriah, Camest not thou from thy journey, why didst thou then not go down unto thy house?"*

Verse 11: *"And Uriah said unto David: The ark, and Israel, and Judah abide in tents; and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into my house, to eat and drink, and lie with my wife? as thou livest and as thy soul liveth I will not do this thing."*

Verse 12: *"And David said to Uriah, tarry here to-day also, and to-morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day and the morrow."*

Verse 13: *"And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk; and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house."*

Verse 14: *"And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah."*

Verse 15: *"And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die."*

The plan worked well: Joab does not ask a question or even seem to commune with himself to the contrary, but that the King's mandate is divine. Uriah feels that he has found favor with the King, joyfully and hopefully carries this message to Joab, little thinking that it is his own death warrant.

Joab reconnoiters the ramparts of the enemy's city;

the plans of procedure are laid. Uriah is placed in a position where Joab knew the valiant men of the city were; action begins, and the King's wishes are gratified: an arrow shot from the city wall speeds to its mark, and Uriah is slain!

Uriah's wife mourns for her husband, but at the end of her mourning David has her brought to his house and she is made an addition to his harem. David, up to date, has ten concubines that we know of; we do not know how many more. And now he has four wives.

David is held up before the world to-day by the dispensers of Christianity as a prototype of Christ.

Reader, is it not glorious to contemplate? Should we not be thankful that we live in a land of Bibles?

Among the mysteries of godliness contained in this Book, here is one more—the concluding sentence of this chapter: “*But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.*”

When Uzzah was smitten in his effort to save the ark, David was displeased; and here in this case God is displeased. God and David mentally and morally seem to be on about the same plane.

Now let us ruminate for a little time. These Israelites or Jews by the decree of destiny are scattered all over the earth; we all have an opportunity of seeing and knowing them and becoming acquainted with their characteristics.

Morally or mentally, do they occupy a higher plane than do the gentiles of to-day? I am not putting this question to the Jew or to the Gentile; they may alike be biased. I am asking Truth and Justice to answer this question. It is evident from this Jewish history

that the Gentiles were far in advance of them in the arts and sciences in those primitive days, and as civilization advanced, their God, which they seem to have had caged in this ark, was a waning power, and if they, God's enemies—the Gentiles—had not have adopted him for selfish purposes he would have been defunct for thousands of years, as are the gentile Gods who were holding forth at this Bible-making period.

CHAPTER XIX

This I know is not the popular belief. I well understand the orthodox claim that everything that stands for our present civilization is owing to the Bible. So we will toil on. Let us further consider this thing that displeased God. Dear friends, when you read your Bible and become elated over the victories of these Jews and the power of God working with them, and your face glows with exultation, you should ever bear in mind that we are the people that all these wars were waged against, and if God's promises had been fulfilled, you could not to-day have an existence, unless it were in a state of the most abject slavery, our women debauched, and any of us killed at any time if we were not profitable, because we would be their money.

David ordered Uriah put in a dangerous place; of course he was doomed to be slain, unless God had taken the thing in hand, as he did for David when Saul was projecting his javelin at him. If God was displeased, as he was concerning himself all of the time with all of the affairs of Israel, why did he not whisper in

David's ear at this time? David here causes the death of one Jew. Think of what he did when he was among the Philistines. It was our people he was murdering then, with no regard to age or sex. Then God was pleased. Think of what he had in mind when Abigail met him and his four hundred. This man Nabal was of the house of Caleb, whose record was the highest among the Jews, whose household he planned to assassinate and all that pertained to him.

We cannot take up the time farther directly with David. There is much more I would be pleased to say, but time and space forbids. There is one thing of which you may rest assured. David has been done no injustice by me: and as the Queen of Sheba once said of Solomon, "The half has never yet been told" of the dark and murderous deeds of this God-fearing, lecherous, treacherous, misrepresented, overrated man David! While I have promised not to take up the time farther with David, there is yet a thing or two that cannot be well omitted. I must ask you here to mark your place, take your Bible and carefully read and consider this Scripture lesson contained in 2 Sam. xxi. 1 to 15. Then consider what an uncertain quantity is the Christians' Father God! And also consider what must have been the feelings of poor Michal, Saul's daughter, David's first wife, when she is informed what is to be the fate of her five adopted sons (she was denied children of her own, as you may remember), whom God and David decrees must be butchered that God's wrath may be appeased and prosperity restored.

Again, please turn to 2 Sam. xxii. 21 to 25, and consider the magnitude of David's cheek. Moses' self-

adulation pales to nothingness: "*The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his judgments were before me: and as for his statutes, I did not depart from them. I was also upright before him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity. Therefore the Lord hath recompensed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness in his eyesight.*" Christian friends, what do you think of that?

We will now turn the kaleidoscope and have a change of scene. 'Tis said God moves in a mysterious way, and here is some Scripture which all must admit verifies this statement. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1: "*And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go number Israel and Judah.*"

Then turn to 1 Chron. xxi. 1: "*And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.*"

Now, these two texts both relate to the same thing in regard to circumstance, time, and place.

I premise that you understand that Chronicles is a sort of rehash of the Scripture from Adam down to Ezra. What this is for I do not know. I have wondered much. Perhaps some robed priest or high salaried divine might inform us—but what would that be worth? Now these two Scriptural statements under criticism differ essentially and must, to the inquiring mind, demand a clearing up.

This makes the anger of the Lord and Satan in a normal condition synonymous. Now, in this infallible Book, then, are we to proceed upon this basis; and then must we return, retouch, and efface, to make our work fit these conditions, or shall we accept the proposition that this inerrant Bible contains some errors, and proceed? I think that the best way to solve the problem.

Now, whether God or Devil that ordered it, let us consider what the order is. It is for David to number Israel and Judah. How could that be a sin? It had been done repeatedly; at least, they tell us how many there were upon several occasions.

One of the books ascribed to Moses is called Numbers, because Israel was here numbered. Now, if this God is not here trying to kick up a fuss, I would like to know what he was at? But it seems God wanted another high old time, to preserve a wholesome fear, which seems to be his chief delight; so, as soon as the thing is done, God is after David.

But here is a thing I must speak of in this connection. Why should there be such a discrepancy in the figures in these two accounts of this enumeration since it is done at the same time by the same ruler?

Joab seems to be the King's best all-'round man, and in Samuel the number of men that drew the sword were eight hundred thousand of Israel and of Judah five hundred thousand. Joab gives these numbers in both cases, and in Chronicles he gives the numbers, one million one hundred thousand of Israel, and four hundred and seventy thousand of Judah. A discrepancy of three hundred thousand men.

If God had grumbled at this carelessness in putting this in his Word in this bungling manner, we might not wonder.

But, however, this enumeration displeases God, and the vengeance God wreaks makes David himself expostulate.

Nathan the Prophet got after David in the matter of Uriah. But Gad is the seer in this offense that makes God's will and wishes known.

Gad tells David God has three ways in which to get square with him; he only expects to make use of but one; and he is going to give David his choice 'twixt the three.

Here is where God's mercy comes in, that we hear so much about. Here they are: Either three years famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee; or three days the sword of the Lord, even the pestilence in the land and the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. God here wants to impress David of his superior power; how in the three days he can do a destruction equal to the other named visitations in the length of time named. Gad gives David a hint that time is valuable and he must render his decision in regard to his choice now, so that he can inform the Lord, who is waiting for the answer.

David says to Gad, I am in a great strait. It seems David would have been pleased to have had a little time in which to deliberate, but this was denied. So he does just what we are admonished to do, to trust himself to the mercy of God. If it were possible to select from this Bible a portion that sets God at the greatest dis-

count, and I were to do it, I should certainly have to tarry a long time here if I did not make this selection.

Here it might look as though God were going to try David's faith as he did Abraham's in offering his own son. And when David concluded to rest on God's everlasting arm, and expressing faith in his great mercies, what does God do? "*The Lord sends a pestilence and destroys seventy thousand men.*" Understand, dear friends, these are men; so we have a right to add to this list, of women and children, and still be conservative, one hundred and forty thousand more, making a grand total of two hundred and ten thousand lives! And for what? For numbering Israel.

We are here in America numbered every ten years by the United States government—if it was an offense then in the sight of God, why is it not so now? We are taught to pray to this same God. Do you suppose he was ever here in America? I think not.

But was this God's wrath appeased here? Oh, no! See 1 Chron. xxi. 15: "*And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it; and as he was destroying, the Lord beheld, and he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand.*" When you hear someone speaking derogatory of God's mercy and loving kindness, just refer him to this text, and I guess you'll have him treed.

See same chapter, verse 17. David says: "*Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, O Lord my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.*"

Here is David endeavoring to teach God a primary lesson or two in moral ethics. What do you think of that? Just consider David's record when he was among the Philistines—in fine, his whole career—and then, here God has so outdone him that David belches forth his disgust. I said we would let David rest, but thought it necessary to follow his history thus much farther, not for the purpose of showing David's character, but the character of Israel's God.

This bit of Bible history, considered from all its phases, for perspicuity, is indeed impressive. Of what? That Israel's God is but a figment.

In our courts of justice, where a case, though it may be of state-wide interest, comes before the judicial tribunal, and the verdict hinges upon the proof of a certain thing, and there comes forward five or six and testify to it, declaring that they have no personal interest in the matter, though there are many more ready to come forward and testify to the same, the judge will say there is no need of taking up farther time, as there is nothing offered in evidence to the contrary: the case may without further delay be submitted to the jury.

This is the way this Bible God question appeals to me: that the internal evidence is overwhelmingly against, while there is nothing upon which Intelligence and Reason can base the ghost of a claim for it. Nor can I see where there is a shadow of enjoyment in such belief.

The remainder of the Old Scripture we must turn over rapidly, touching occasionally here and there.

But we must make a brief examination of the prophecies, for these are what have kept the Old Book afloat, and herein the greatest delusion lies. Here is a clipping that came to my hand but recently, I think from the Chicago *Record-Herald*, which gives us an opportunity to get a peep behind the theological curtain. And it substantiates what I am trying tell:

“Religion Not of Divine Origin—It Is Not from a God, Prof. Foster Says, But an Achievement of Man.

“Chicago, Dec. 3, 1908.

“George B. Foster, of the University of Chicago Divinity School, whose higher criticisms of the Bible have agitated orthodox Christianity, told the budding clergymen of the school to-day that religion was not of divine or miraculous origin. It is not a religion from a God, said he, but an achievement of man, who created his own gods in ancient times, in order that he might have them to help him in his defenselessness and ignorance; to aid him in conquering his foes, and to dispel the darkness of his future and the fear of death.

“More and more people are giving up the idea that their religion is something handed down to them from a divine source. They are coming to see that their religion is just as good and better than if it had been given to them without the work of human agencies.

“Consequently, religion is on a more rational basis, as people are cultivating it just as they cultivate music, language, science, and morality.”

Dear believer, what do you think of this? Here is a

professor of a divinity school who would knock the stuffing entirely out of your sacred thunder! He tells what he believes to be the truth to these budding clergymen; but what are these clergymen going to preach and teach when they go abroad in the world to disseminate knowledge gained from these high places?

Dear believer, you do not realize how you are deceived! And what it costs you: not alone in material things, but your first stage of existence is spent in loading your mind with error which dwarfs your soul, and before true soul development can commence, you have all of this error to unlearn. Then consider how you are handicapped. Of course you may say that, if what I teach is true, there will be a long time to readjust mistakes and get things set right. The criminal might say the same when he has a ten-years' sentence passed upon him; but could you think such paltry self-consolation as this wise? Certainly not; but this is just as wise as that answer would be to the above proposition.

Now, before I wander too far from this episode of David numbering Israel, and this terrible punishment inflicted by God for doing what looks like so harmless a thing, and a thing perfectly consistent with good statesmanship, I will just offer an opinion as a commentary upon this bit of Scripture.

Because, although I hold that this God is purely imaginary, yet I think he has been done great injustice here, in ascribing to him this terrible visitation where the offense is nothing.

People who diligently read and search the Scripture,

believing it to be what the clergy tells them, must from necessity become exceedingly superstitious. And when a calamity befalls a neighbor, they set themselves at work to discover the sin for which God has sent the punishment. I have heard God-fearing people talk these things over many times, and in most cases they could discover out the sin. And I freely confess that sometimes their reason would be about as rational as this of David numbering Israel. But if they could not discover a sin which they thought measured up to the extent of the punishment, then there was some hidden sin, "a skeleton in the closet," you know.

A contagion has struck Israel at the time of David's reign. These people were utterly ignorant of all laws in regard to pathology, therapeutics, or of quarantining, and from the account the decimation was horrifying, and after the plague had run its course and spent its fury, the priests and seers set themselves at work to discover the sin or cause, and it is: That David numbered Israel.

We have now carried this hurried examination to the books called Kings. David retires from the stage of action, and his son Solomon, the wise, succeeds him to the throne. We cannot take but little time with Solomon, although the Sunday school teacher tells us he is the wisest man the world has ever known, which is just about as true as the rest of the Bible.

His is a case of lust and dissipation run mad; and to teach childhood that this man is wise is a crime against morality and a slander upon humanity.

His first act after his coronation shows him a fratri-

cidal murderer, a liar, and a villain of the blackest type.

Here is King Solomon's first act after he ascends to the throne: It seems Adonijah, another of David's sons, had aspirations for the throne, and thought possession would be a strong point in his favor; but he failed in this, and the question of kingship was settled in Solomon's favor. And when Adonijah got hold of the horns of the altar, and implored his brother's mercy, which the King granted, upon promise of good behavior, it looks as though there were a trace of humanity in King Solomon's heart. (See 1 Kings ii.)

The gist of the story is this. Adonijah was older than Solomon and thought himself the rightful heir to the throne, but David and the power behind the throne—the priesthood—place Solomon thereon.

It should be remembered that in David's house was a Jewess by the name of Abishag, selected and brought there to see if she could, in consequence of her radiant beauty, bring back to David his old-time vigor in this, his last sickness, by placing this pretty girl in bed with him. But all this could not restore nor save old, worn-out David from going the way of all flesh. This Hebrew girl after the death of David remained still at the house: and Adonijah thinks that if he is denied the throne, he should be allowed to placate the loss by having Abishag for a wife. It is not plain how King Solomon comes to own her, but thus it appears.

So Adonijah employs Bathsheba, Solomon's mother—Uriah's wife—to make intercession for him. He assures her it is only a little thing he asks, and he will grant it.

Bathsheba replies, Well, I will speak for thee unto the King. She goes before the King, the King grants her a hearing. She says she desires a small petition, and she prayed he would not say her nay. "*The King says, Ask on, my mother, for I will not say thee nay.*" And she said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife."

Solomon, instead of granting this favor, or civilly refusing, which would have been only to have lied to his mother, but no, he sends an executioner and has him murdered for simply asking this favor. It seems Adonijah could not have had much acquaintance with his brother or he would not have asked him for a woman. Here is a sample of King Solomon's character, and this act seems to meet God's approbation.

We cannot take up much time with King Solomon. His temple reminds one of Aladdin's palace, and the one is no doubt as true as the other. The city of Jerusalem has been explored and probed, and excavations have been made in every part of the city, to see if there could be a foundation stone of this marvelous temple found, but to no avail. The Sultan has granted these explorers every privilege possible until they wanted to excavate under his temple, but here he drew the line. It is conceded by our best scholars that Solomon's temple belongs to the category of myths and never had an existence only in the imagination; as does the tabernacle, with its tons of gold and silver and material which to have moved would require a modern freight train of goodly length. The fact is, this temple is chained to all of these myths—Joshua and the sun, Jonah and the whale, the plagues of Egypt, the

dividing of the waters of the Red Sea, and a thousand and one other happenings that never happened.

It is exceedingly impressive to look King Solomon's record over. In the early part of his career, God appeared to him and asked him what he should give him. Solomon chose wisely indeed; he asked for wisdom with which to rule his kingdom. This pleased God so well that he promised to make a few perquisites. Just see the result of this gift of wisdom: and after a life of lust and profligacy, and doing what God had strictly forbidden, marrying strange women, he becomes an idolator!

Alas for the wisdom of Solomon! See 1 Kings xi. 3, 4: "*And he had seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods.*"

I now would call your attention to 1 Kings ix. 13. It is here stated how Solomon paid Hiram for material for this temple. It says Hiram gave him cedar trees and fir trees, and gold according to all his desire. Solomon paid him off in cities. He gave Hiram twenty of them in the land of Galilee. Hiram goes and looks them over and is not pleased. We do not understand that there was any action brought against Solomon for damage. Hiram simply called them the land of Cabul "unto this day."

Now here we have it again, "unto this day." This proves that this writer of this Scripture is reaching far back into the past, and is reeling off that which is drawn from a myth, revamped into another, and is

served up to us by the clergy as the "infallible word of God."

Now, in 1 Kings xii. 19 we find this same expression again: "*So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.*" And then, what may please the believer, and strengthen his faith in God's omnipresence, we find him advising on both sides of this divided house, that they might successfully exterminate each other.

CHAPTER XX

These two books, called 1st and 2d Kings, are a bewildering, disgusting mess called history; but it is not history; it is constantly referring to some other account that this scripture is drawn from, and its contradictions, absurdities, things so utterly inhuman, and so much of it, and so much repetition, that it becomes wearisome and disgusting to recount or refute: because it does not look possible that a human being could be made to believe that such paltry stuff as this is a revelation from the Infinite God.

Now to substantiate my claim, I will make a selection or two. The first from 1 Kings xvi., commencing at the first verse and continuing to the fifteenth: "*Then the word of the Lord came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying, Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel; and thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins; Behold I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the pos-*

terity of his house; and I will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat.

"Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?"

"So Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah: and Elah his son reigned in his stead.

"And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the Lord against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the Lord, in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and because he killed him."

(8) "In the twenty and sixth year of Asa King of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, two years."

(9) "And his servant Zimri, captain of half his chariots, conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza steward of his house in Tirzah."

(10) "And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa King of Judah, and reigned in his stead."

(11) "And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he slew all the house of Baasha; he left him not one alive, neither of his kinsfolks, nor of his friends."

(12) "Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake against Baasha by Jehu the prophet."

(13) *"For all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with their vanities."*

(14) *"Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?"*

Now, reader, here is a prophecy of God as it came to Jehu the prophet. Now, there is no prophecy given in this Bible from any higher source. This is right from headquarters, according to "The Book." If there is anything spoken by God through the mouth of a prophet, we have no more right to reject this prophecy than we have to reject any other, or the whole.

Now, I would like to have you understand this prophecy before we proceed farther to analyze the prophets or their prophecies.

The word of the Lord came to Jehu the prophet: That Baasha and his household and all of his kinsfolk must be destroyed. 'Tis said that "distance lends enchantment to the view"; but we all know that if we would give a thing close inspection, we must place ourselves at the proper limit of vision. Thus, in this case of Jehu's prophecy, we must bring this down to our time and age, where we can get it in correct range of our mental vision.

Now, suppose at this age we have a prophet of God, which we have just as good right to have as had the Jews at that time. Now let us premise that this prophet should declare that God had made his will known to him, that a certain family in our community

must be plucked up, destroyed; not only the whole family, but all his kindred and friends. So you see what a power is given this prophet to work out his hellish designs; with people sufficiently ignorant and superstitious when a prophecy like this is thrown upon their ears, being the word of God and his will and wishes embodied in said prophecy, what would be the result? Just about what happened here in this case. Any religious zealot would think he was doing God's will in committing this wholesale murder.

But suppose, dear believer, to bring this in closer range, this prophecy is pronounced against you and your household. Do you not think you would question this prophet's credentials by this time? I think so.

I rather guess Prof. Foster is correct in his views upon revealed religion. How can the believer believe such flimsy stuff as the above a revelation from the Infinite? How can there be pleasure in believing it?

This is a fair sample of the prophecies. I shall aim to give you a few more when I reach that part of my work.

Our next Scripture lesson begins at 1 Kings xvii. At the beginning of this chapter Elijah the Tishbite commences holding forth. This is the first he is mentioned; he is full grown and enters upon his duty as though he had been in business for a long time and thoroughly understands his work. Now let us consider a few things that he does, and see to what extent the Christian's faith may reasonably be strengthened by the doings of this marvelous Bible character. The wonderful things that Elijah did are among my earliest recollections. Those impressions are among the things

to which the mystic chords of memory still cling; and I can but express astonishment at the way I accepted those stories then as told me by my parents, and the way I look at them now. The trouble is, they are never presented to the child as they really are by Christian teachers and the child gets erroneous impressions; and, as it has been expressed:

“A pebble in the streamlet scant
Has turned the course of many a river;
A dewdrop on the tender plant
Has warped the giant oak forever.”

Elijah the Tishbite is a character laid claim to by some Spiritualists in proof of Biblical Spiritualism; but it partakes too much of the miraculous, too unreasonable, too diabolical, for me to make any use of it in this direction. I can make no use of Elijah except in the negative. He is claimed to have been reincarnated into John the Baptist. Christ says this, but the truth-seeker is not bound to believe this, until all that Christ is made to say, and to have done, are proved rational and true. Elijah again appears with Moses on the Mount of the Transfiguration, if the account be true, and Peter and James and John saw him. I will aim to speak of this later.

Elijah makes his *début* as though he had dropped from the clouds, does a number of stunts as though he were trying to beat all previous records, and is then translated into heaven, as the account says. Now, if Elijah had taught or done one thing humane or that

would accord with common decency, the fraud might not be so apparent; but look his record over.

The first thing he would make you believe is that he had sole control of the weather department; and, to carry out his diabolical plans, makes this proclamation: "*As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.*" And then comes the proverbial "word of the Lord," telling him to go and hide by the brook Cherith. Why would he want to keep himself in hiding? However, here he is fed by ravens, while all the rest of Israel are starving to death. Who knows that ravens carried him bread and meat? He was alone, and we have no other proof than Elijah's bare word for it. Now, is not this question of mine enough to make one smile, since there has been opportunity for setting afloat just such legends as this, and then doctoring them or remodeling them for thousands of years. It seems that the Bible-makers were the clumsiest botchers that the world has ever known, and yet their mummery with orthodoxy passes at full face value and is given to the "child of simple trusting faith" as soul food.

This brook dries up, and then "the word of the Lord comes again," informs Elijah that there is a widow that he (God) has made arrangements for him to board with. Was not God on Lijah's side? He goes as directed, finds this widow with one son, a small child, I would infer. She is hard up; she has but a handful of meal and a very little oil, which she expects to cook for herself and son and then prepare for the inevitable.

As I understand this Scripture, this is all Lijah's doing. It could not help theology to try to lay this famine to God's charge. I think we should give this glory to Lige. God's record for this kind of dealing stands too high for him to quarrel for this glory.

Now just see what this man of God enjoys. There can be no doubt but the whole country was suffering to the same extent as was this widow and her son. Elijah extends his power to this meal barrel and her cruse of oil; we are not informed what kind of oil. He tells her to make him a cake, which she does, and the oil and meal lasts on and on. After a time the son falls sick: we do not know whether this miraculous meal agrees with him or what it is, but he dies. The poor widow wails the loss of her son. Lijah takes him and goes up in the garret and lays upon him and calls upon his God with fervent prayer, and lays upon him again—he stretches himself upon the child three times—and the child is restored to life by this marvelous man of God. This is the first case that they have got on to the racket of restoring the dead to life.

The miraculous destruction of life has been much in evidence, and terrible to contemplate; but this is the first time that there has been produced a back-action. Now, it is understood by the medical profession that there are cases of suspended animation bearing such a striking resemblance to death itself that it has been proved that people have been buried alive. But where death has taken place, the heart action has entirely ceased and the blood has coagulated, there has never been a case where life has been restored, nor will there ever be.

This case of this widow's son is not considered, only as it brings this subject before us.

When Lijah brings this child down from the loft and shows him to the widow, calling her attention to the fact that he had brought him back again to life, then she seems for the first time to suspect him to be a man of God.

What we have given thus far of Elijah is confined to the seventeenth chapter of the first book of Kings.

Our next lesson is drawn from the next, or 1 Kings xviii. Elijah's next scheme is to get the drop on all of the prophets of Baal. We cannot follow Lijah very closely here; we must cut the corners, otherwise the story will be too long to fit the place. Elijah arranges with Ahab. Ahab is King of Israel, but he has gone a-whoring as usual after other gods, this time after Baal and his prophets. Here he arranges with Ahab for a test case, to prove the efficiency of their respective gods.

Lige arranges the terms and conditions; they are to have two bullocks cut in pieces, and put upon wood with no fire underneath. The test is to see which God is the best hand at producing what we would term spontaneous combustion, with conditions equal.

When the arrangements are made, Lige calls attention to the fact that there are four hundred and fifty prophets on Baal's side, and he alone on his God's side. Then Lige tells them to proceed with their side of the game, their prayers to Baal. This they commence early in the day, to put up their supplications and continue this till high noon. Then Lijah begins to make sport of them, and tells them to shout louder,

possibly their god is away on a journey, perhaps asleep, and must be awoke. And they cried and prayed still louder, and finally cut themselves with knives, till there was a copious flow of blood. Well, these foolish prophets kept up their jamboree till time for vesper service, and no god answered and no fire was kindled in their wood. Then Lige tells them to fall back; time is up with them. Then Lige proceeds with his side of the game: he piles up twelve stones, lays on his wood, tells the people to stand close, to see that there is no fraud lurking in his test, when this part of the job is done; he then proceeds to dig a trench around his altar; he then tells them to fill four barrels with water (how things seem to be always at hand!—how came they by these barrels?) and pour this water upon his altar; he tells them to repeat this operation four times, which is done; until the overflow fills the trench around the altar.

This looks to us like an extravagant use of water, since it has not rained for three years and the people, we have a right to suppose, are all dead, only those that are giving us this entertainment. But Lijah don't mind this waste of water; the occasion warrants it. Verse 36: "*And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.*"

(37) "*Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.*"

(38) "*Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed*

the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench."

(39) *"And when all the people saw it they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."*

(40) *"And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and he slew them there."*

Now here comes in the mystery of godliness again. Does it not look strange, to say the least, that after this proving of gods, and Elijah's God had skunked them completely, that Elijah and his God would not have acted once humanely? Why could not Elijah have said to the prophets of Baal: "Now, my dear erring brothers, does not this prove to you that your gods are entirely inadequate to cope with Israel's God? Dear erring brothers, this God of Israel will gladly extend his omnipotent arm to you and all of yours, if you will but reject your little worthless gods and turn to him. Just see, here are four hundred and fifty of you that can now return to your people, and teach this glorious eternal Truth: That the God of Israel is God indeed." If Elijah could have been prompted by his God to have said this, or to this effect, and Israel's God had have worked along these lines, how much better would the plan have been laid; and although the world would be still deceived, yet how much better would the showing have been, how much better would the way have been paved, and how much better the prerogative for his Sonship Christ. If the creators of Israel's God could have known enough to have worked

along the lines of humanity, his Son might have inherited a better disposition, and might not have been made to say things so repugnant to our better nature. "But of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these, 'It might have been.'" Elijah, according to the account, slew the four hundred and fifty. Just think of one man killing this number of human beings in an open field! How the godly old prophet must have enjoyed it!

(41) He then tells Ahab to get him up and eat and drink, for there is the sound of abundance of rain.

We cannot make it profitable to follow Elijah farther; he makes his exit by going up to heaven in a whirlwind, and his mantle falls on Elisha, his successor.

This man Elijah has been preached for centuries as one of the greatest prophets; but what does he tell us? He does not prophesy of Christ one syllable, nor one thing that can be tortured into anything of any value to the Christian churches of to-day. He is simply a wonderman.

Possibly where he goes up in the whirlwind may be made to typify Christ's ascension to heaven; but there have been many people since then carried up in cyclones which might typify the same thing.

For our next Scripture lesson, I will invite your attention to the account where Ahab, King of Judah, goes up to possess Ramoth-Gilead. Here we are led to suppose that all the prophets of Israel are called together, to prophesy, and as it is the prophets and their prophecies we are interested in, this selection makes us a good object lesson of both God and the

prophets. (See 1 Kings xxii.) The great majority of the kings of Israel, and of Judah, God seems to hate inveterately. In fact, there are none that I recall that he did not abhor but David and Asa. There never was one that tried harder to please this fickle God than did Josiah, but he failed. Now our lesson. Ahab, as usual, did evil in the sight of the Lord. God claims he was the worst among them up to this date; and he sends Elijah to pronounce his malediction: and this makes Ahab go softly—carefully—when Ahab hears what is in store for him. (1 Kings xxi. 27.) “*He rent his clothes and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.*”

(28) “*And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days; but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.*”

Now all must concede that this is a high order of justice. Ahab has done evil, and is repentant, so God reserves the punishment for the next generation: but this is a falsehood. God promises to withhold his wrath, but this next chapter shows us he has changed his mind, and engages himself in suborning the angels of heaven to put Ahab where the dogs can lick up his blood.

According to the account, Israel and Judah are at this time on fair terms, and Jehosophat, King of Judah, came down to the King of Israel (Ahab) and said (verse 3): “*Know ye that Ramoth-Gilead is ours, and we be still, and take it not out of the hand of the King of Syria?*”

(4) "*And he said unto Jehosophat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-Gilead?*" And Jehosophat replies in substance, "My sword and yours are kin."

(5) "*And Jehosophat said unto the King of Israel (Ahab), Inquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to-day.*" (6) "*Then the King of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the King.*"

Jehosophat wants to know if there is yet another prophet that they may inquire of.

Ahab says, "There is yet one more, but I hate him because he always prophesies evil concerning me."

But Jehosophat says, "Let not the King say so, but let this prophet also be called."

Then Ahab called an officer and instructed him to bring this prophet, Micaiah by name.

The two kings get themselves arranged during this interim with all of the prophets in order, and Zedekiah made him horns of iron to illustrate his prophecy and make it forceful; and said, "Thus saith the Lord, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them."

(12.) "*And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-Gilead, and prosper, for the Lord shall deliver it into the king's hand.*

(13.) "*And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying Behold now, the words of the prophets declare unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good.*"

(14.) "*And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak.*"

(15.) "*So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go and prosper; for the Lord shall deliver it unto the hand of the king.*"

Now this is what Micaiah gives straight, but Ahab does not appear to feel just satisfied with his prophecy, and wants to cross-examine: And by prying he gets and thereby we get a view from behind the curtain; and here it is:

(19.) "*And he said, Hear thou therefore the words of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand, and on his left.*"

(20.) "*And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.*"

(21.) "*And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him.*"

(22.) "*And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him and prevail also: go forth, and do so.*"

(23.) "*Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.*"

Well the sequel of this story shows that Micaiah's prophecy on his cross-examination came true (read

chapter) Elijah prophecied that dogs should lick up Ahab's blood, in the preceding chapter, verse nineteen, verse thirty-eight of this chapter, shows how it is fulfilled. But, reader, consider the character of the Christian's father God. He promises after Elijah's prophecy is pronounced and Ahab is repentant, that he is going to postpone this punishment meted out for Ahab, and visit it upon his son. But now let us draw from this Scriptural account, our lesson which is to aid us in our Bible study of these prophecies of which we have been taught so much, and have heard preached so much. We learn here that this God is not so stable minded, as some would make you believe—that he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever—We also learn that he is not particularly conscientious, and when it may please him to set a movement on foot to work destruction to an individual or a nation he needs only to make his wishes known, and in the courts of heaven comes forward spirits that can condescend to do that which would discount anything that has been ascribed to the Orthodox devil, so that 'twould make him blush with shame. And God is pleased to have accounts like this passed down to us as a part of his eternal plan, to prove his infinite and unbounded love to man.

If God will condescend to deeds like this and suborn his angels to deceive his prophets, what foundation do we have to rest a hope of heaven upon? If 'twere blazoned in the Scripture so plain that all who run might read, that Christ was to come, at such a time and place and every detail given full and clear, by these his prophets, what warrant have we for belief? when 'tis proven o'er and o'er; That the Father God will thus

deceive, and teach his chosen people everything that is bad.

If he would resort to subterfuge like this for as trivial a thing as to get Ahab where the dogs can lick up his blood, for this, he would deceive four hundred prophets. Then why might not they who prophecy of Christ have been likewise deceived?

But I do not think that this is so. I do not think there was a lying spirit put in the mouth of the prophets that prophecied of the Christian's Saviour.

Reader, I do not entertain one thought that one of the Old Testament prophets among the thousands we are told of, ever thought of Christ, or ever prophecied one word that can be rationally tortured into a thing of the kind, as I expect to prove. Nor have I any more idea that Israel's God ever dreamed of this Orthodox Redeemer of the New Testament.

It seems, dear reader, that if you have followed me till now, that reason must begin to assert itself, and you must begin to mistrust that there is a mistake somewhere in this theological machinery.

But let us to our next Scripture lesson. The next Bible character that I would speak of is Elisha, the man who inherits Elijah's mantle—the one upon whom Elijah's mantle falls—We are led to understand as per Scripture, that without this mantle Elisha would have been but an ordinary man; but since he has it he does wonders that make the natives stare and marvel much.

He performs very similar to his predecessor: but the truth is so much drivel about the account of these two men; so much sameness, that amounts to nothing, and partakes so much of the nature of nursery tales

that we become weary. There is nothing about the account of these two men, but that which awakens disgust, and makes us wonder, what did the writer of this insane, idiotic nonsense have in mind at the time of writing, and what could the compilers of this Bible or canon have thought when they cast their vote: And then again it is just as good as the most of it, as it is intended to be understood.

It is a sad reflection on the intelligence of mankind, at this age of the world to make pretension that this Bible is a revelation from the Infinite.

Now I will just give, say two samples of Elisha's wonders, God working with him. Elisha restores a dead child to life; that was good of him. But just see, and note, what here stands against this good deed. See 2 Kings ii. 23-24, "*And he (Elisha) went up from thence unto Bethel; and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up thou bald head, go up thou bald head. And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them.*"

There is a certain pathos connected with this story, because these were *little* children, forty and two of them owned by parents we have a right to infer that loved them. These it seems had heard how Elijah had taken the sky fugal degree, and they had a childlike desire to see some of this fun themselves; not thinking particularly any harm in referring to Elisha's bald head. It looks rather heartless for this man of God, to turn and look on them and curse them in the name of the Lord! Elisha we assume knew well God's vindictive nature, and

knew he would be quick to devise a way to bring them to time which the sequel shows. There comes from the wood two she bears, and tears them to a finish. If this tragedy had not been wrought for a special purpose, to impress little children as the ages roll—as I was once impressed—how they must fear God and revere God's good servants, I should say it were not necessary to have scrutinized those bears to see just what their ursine sex were.

Just one more thought in regard to Elisha. See 2 Kings xiii. 20-21, "*And Elisha died and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming of the year.*"

(21.) "*And it came to pass as they were burying a man, that behold they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulcher of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha he revived and stood upon his feet.*"

This quotation, also several others, were brought up in my preliminary work, but I wish to call your attention to certain of them again, and should some one accuse me of undue repetition; to such I would say, I am not engaged in competing for a prize in regard to a literary production, and where repetitions become necessary, I expect to freely make use of them. There is a vast amount of repetition in our Bible; and much which seems wholly unnecessary. It has been said, and all must concede, that a matter of great import cannot well be dismissed by a single stroke of the pen. And as the subject upon which I am engaged, I consider of the greatest interest that can engage our thought; therefore let me repeat when necessary.

In speaking of repetitions in the Scripture, I would

call your attention to one case which seems unnecessary, 2 Kings xix, and Isaiah xxxvi. These two chapters read precisely the same. Now since this bloody story is told in the blood stained book of Kings, and Isaiah, the greatest of the greater prophets, because 'tis claimed he prophecies more of the coming of the Prince of Peace, than do the others, therefore I do not see why he should have wished to embody this sanguinary story in his prophecy, there is certainly no prophecy, about this. In this account referred to, God's destroying angel, metes out death to one hundred and eighty five thousand Syrians, for the glory of God. Please look this up and prove it for yourselves.

But to our lesson in regard to Elisha's bones. Do you believe this story? If you do not believe this, the whole account of these two wonderful men falls. Because this is just as rational of belief you will discover as any of the rest of the stories relating to them. And if you do believe this, what a blunder is here made; because if there was this power remaining in this man's bones, consider how valuable they would have been in restoring the dead to life. We have no reason to premise that they would have lost their power by use any more than magnetism or virtue, and what a monopoly the possessor would have had. I do not see why the general resurrection could not have been brought about in this way. But enough of this. Suppose these miracles all facts: were these people for whom they were wrought improved thereby? Who here in America would vote to have this God here working his miracles to make us God-loving and God-fearing people? Who wants a God that he must hold in fear every breath of his

life? What a sad showing, that of the Jews! And yet they claim that they can read between the lines of their Bible that great promises to them are made, that they are to be gathered together sometime, somewhere yet in the future, and are to be greatly blessed, above all the nations of the earth, yet to be fulfilled. I should think their Old Book would cure them of that faith.

'Tis said the flesh of a snake is a cure for his bite. And I should think this book a good antidote for belief let it be taken in doses large or small.

CHAPTER XXI

For our next lesson, I wish to make a brief review of King Josiah's reign; which is really the closing scene of the Jewish monarchy.

The account of this king's reign commences at the beginning of 2 Kings xxii. Here are the headings of this first chapter.

(1.) Josiah's good reign. (3.) He taketh care for the repair of the temple. (8.) Hilkiah having found a book of the law, Josiah sendeth to Huldah to inquire of the Lord. (15.) Huldah prophecieth the destruction of Jerusalem, but respite thereof in Josiah's time.

Now, dear friends, Josiah's reign is said to be a good one, so let us examine and see what a good reign consists of. He commenced his reign when he was eight years old, it says. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. Josiah it appears was a good little boy. When he was eighteen, he sent word to Hilkiah the high priest, to see what money they had on hand, which the keepers of the door had gathered

of the people, and to have it laid out to repair the temple, unto carpenters and builders and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.

Well while they were overhauling and repairing, verse eighth, Hilkiash the high priest, said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiash gave the book to Shaphan and he read it.

I must confess, I am at a loss in regard to this book. Whether it is the same law that God gave to Moses in the wilderness, or whether it was a revised statute, or something that had been surreptitiously put in the temple to keep the "pot boiling" we cannot tell. It looks however, that they had been running business on tradition and had not kept a copy of the law in sight or had it tacked upon the doorposts as they should, and therefore had digressed until the damage had become irreparable. Shaphan comes to the king, tells him that they have gathered the money and that the work is in progress. He then says Hilkiash the priest, hath discovered to me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.

The book must have contained a startling revelation to the king, for when he heard the words of the book of the law, he rent his clothes; verse 12. The king appointed a committee to go and inquire of the Lord for him, and for all the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found.

They seem to know before they had made inquiry, that the wrath of the Lord was terrible to contemplate. But where does this committee go to make inquiry. What has become of the ark of God through which

Javah was wont to make his will and wishes known? What has become of the body of Priesthood and all of Israel's prophets, that belongs to the king's "Atache"?

Instead of looking to these, Josiah or his committee seems to have no faith in them, they do just what Saul did, when he wanted information he could rely upon; They go to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum, keeper of the wardrobe, and she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college, and they communed with her. And here is what they get:

(15.) *"And she said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel. Tell the man that sent you to me:*

(16.) "Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will bring evil upon this place and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read;"

(17.) "Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched."

(18.) "But to the king of Judah which sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say to him. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, as touching the words which thou hast heard;"

(19.) "Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord."

(20.) "*Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered unto thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.*"

Now the question that forces itself to the front is. Who is Huldah the prophetess; nearly all we have to judge her from is this prophecy she has here pronounced.

She comes to the front just this time as did the woman of En-dor; she speaks boldly; there is no concealment or palliation discernible in her prediction. There has been no lying spirit practicing any of his cajoleries in this case, the thing comes to pass with unerring precision. It is evident to my mind that Huldah belongs to the same school as did the woman of En-dor. The king's committee would certainly not have gone to any second rate place with matter so important, and if she had have belonged to the house of Israel, why should not her book of prophecies have found a place in the Bible? And why should she not have prophesied of this great, coming event, and culmination of this great plan of salvation, Jesus of Nazareth?

It is evident from the conduct of Israel and Judah, that for centuries they have had a mighty slack faith in their God or his prophets, as Josiah's house-cleaning will show.

Josiah after this committee has returned with Huldah's prophecy, sends and gathers all the elders of Judah, and Jerusalem; in fine he gathers all the people both small and great, and all the prophets: is not this

enough to make one smile?—We do not understand that Huldah is among them; she would not be admitted to that ilk among the Jews.—See 2 Kings xxiii. 2, “*And he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord.*” This chapter and the one preceding, you should read carefully several times over, whether you are a believer or not; because it teaches a lesson of great importance to the investigator, let him be on either side of the proposition.

A great many thoughts suggest themselves in perusing these chapters, I do not see how the believer can but ask this question. Have not God and Israel both made a grave mistake and has not the scheme thus far been a dismal failure. And see what it has cost! Consider the tragedies that are here enacted in this account; and where is Huldah? Has she been murdered in Josiah’s zeal to get right with God? Verse twenty-four of this twenty-third chapter, strongly suggests this question, and justifies this conclusion, “*Moreover the workers with familiar spirits and the wizards that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem did Josiah put away.*” (Murder.)

But here dear friends we must hold Josiah up in his zeal, because there are a large fraction of the population of Jerusalem, that God and Judah could not drive out, and they dwell in Jerusalem unto this day.

We have good reason to suspect that Huldah was a Jebusite. First—The name is not a Jewish name, and Second—She was connected with the college at Jerusalem: and a college or a temple of learning was something entirely foreign to Judaism. As their God

had never manifested any interest in schools for secular knowledge.

Here in (2 Kings xxxiii. 25-26-27) is one of the toughest problems for the Christian that his book contains; and shows that this God is not what the Christian claims, when he says he is a prayer hearing and a prayer answering God.

In summing up Josiah's detergent work, it states:

(25.) "*And like unto him, was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.*"

(26.) "*Notwithstanding, the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal.*"

(27.) "*And the Lord said I will remove Judah also out of my sight as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this City Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, my name shall be there.*"

Whether this prophecy is built up to fit the circumstances, or not judge ye.

But according to their history this is virtually the end of the Jewish monarchy. There was a feeble pretence to rulership by Jehoikim I, and Jehoikim II, his son, reigned three months. But Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon, it seems grew weary of the behavior of this Godly blood-thirsty little faction, and concludes to give them a term of service of captivity into Babylon; and they pass from the earth as a nation, I think we are safe in saying forever!

There is a thing or two I would speak of at this juncture, First—The last part of Huldah's prophecy.

“Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place.”

God in this communication, does not hold out one ray of hope to Josiah that he is to survive the change of death: nor has he throughout this whole dark revelation, if you are pleased to call it such.

As a recompense for Josiah's good reign he is going to have him removed before his terrible day is to be called on. In verse twenty-nine his death is recorded; he was slain by the sword at Megiddo. And for all we can gleam from the Old Testament Scripture; he is still enjoying a calm and undisturbed repose, untroubled by the last of foes.

What a melancholy showing that of the Jews! It seems astonishing that a people of the intelligence of these in our United States, or in fine of the advanced nations of this globe could be cajoled in believing, at this twentieth century, that this Bible is a revelation from the most High God!

Reader is it not also anomalous, that people from the same base of reasoning will arrive at such divergent conclusions? This obtains as well in politics as in religion.

But in politics it may not look so passing strange, that in this reign of error and misconception, that graft and intrigue should obtain. How could it well be otherwise, with this book which is impressed upon

the mind of the young of all ages, as a revelation of God, therefore the guide book of life, and that from its pages we glean the loftiest conceptions of human virtue.

If as Prof. Foster says, "This Old Scripture is but a reflection of the mind of the barbarous people in the age in which it was created; it is evident that this same Scripture must act as a boomerang and returns to us this same barbarous nature." In fact it leaves us stranded; for this God is so many sided, that I look upon him as much worse than no God at all.

To make myself better understood I would ask this question. How can man be expected to be very much better than his creator? And if this God of the Bible is really and truly our creator, I think we should be truly thankful that we are as good as we are. But if for any reason we conclude that this Bible—Christian—Father—Israel's—Judah's—God, is not our *bonafide* creator, that we then have a right to set up and look conditions over, and to try and improve said conditions in each and all of the human activities, and thereby raise to a higher status the morals of humanity, and give a better interpretation to the word charity.

Charity; love. The Bible is like a two edged sword upon this subject; it cuts both ways: And while there is all this confusion of thought and the corresponding inequality of the necessities of life; while by the door of affluence and wealth, is the sad contrast of poverty and want, in its most aggravated form. And in close proximity to the highly salaried vicar or priest dwells the poor layman barred by poverty from the privilege

of hearing the preached word that leads to heaven, to God.

And yet amid all this strife, this inequality of wealth, and conflicting religions, and conflicting policies of every name and nature, there is still the straight and narrow way, Truth. Eternal Truth! the only guiding star upon which the poor bewildered wanderer can rest a hope. "But, here's the rub." Among the many stars that rise and set, and glow with an effulgence that dazzles the mental vision with strange fascination, where gazers are to be counted by the million, and who with exultation shout to their respective star, All Hail! All Hail! Well might we ask, how are we to tell the false star from the true? Reason make use of Reason, the gift that raises man above the level of the brute and makes him monarch of created things. Reason is our true redeemer, and the messenger of love that is to discover to us demonstrated truth and see it enthroned in its rightful place the human heart.

Now I would like to speak for a brief space to the Christian. You may think I take delight in laboring to break down your faith, and then smile with exultation o'er the ruin I have wrought. I assure you I do not feel this way. I feel like one who has wandered over deserts dark and drear: and was rescued by the beacon star of Truth, by taking Reason for a guide, and as it lifted from my life a weary load, why should I not, out of love and friendship for my own, have a kindly desire to let you know?

How many a Christian relying on his faith and what he thinks the promises of God has lived a consistent Christian life and ended his days in the almshouse.

While others bloated with selfrighteousness and greed, have thanked God that they were not like this poor pauper. 'Tis evident that there is a screw loose somewhere in this religious and economic machinery, and this is what I would find and discover it to you: and since this common fate Death awaits us all, let us continue hand in hand our examination of the prophets, and see if Reason points out from this vague and obscure accumulation of literature called the prophecies, if Christ is really heralded by them as claimed.

CHAPTER XXII

I shall aim to make a brief mention of the remaining books of the Old Testament, but it is the prophecies claimed to herald Christ, that we will give attention now.

See Matt. i. 2-3, "*Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emanuel, which being interpreted is God with us.*" Now for this prophecy of what is claimed the miraculous conception, you are referred to Isaiah vii. 14. The marginal chronology in Isaiah places this prophecy back to 2 Kings xvi. To the time of the wicked reign of Ahaz.

Now when you study the preceding portion of this chapter containing this prophecy, you will discover that Ahaz is alarmed and not without reason, by threatenings of Rezin, King of Syria, and Pekah, the son of Remaliah, King of Israel, who went up toward Jerusalem, to war against it, but would not prevail against it.

Here is the King of Syria and the King of Israel entered into a confederation against Judah! Now is not this a pretty kettle of fish! to say the least; but we must take it as we find it.

The Lord told Isaiah to go with his son, and meet Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, in the highway of the fuller's field, and there he was going to communicate with him in regard to the state of affairs. Well here is what this confederation propose to do (verse 6) "*Let us go up against Judah and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal.*"

(Verse 7.) Here is what God gives to Isaiah, "*Thus saith the Lord God, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. And God says within sixty-five years Ephraim (Israel) shall be broken that it be not a people.*" This judgment is presumably because of this alliance with Rezin, King of Syria. There seems to be a very different feeling between these two Jewish tribes now than at the time they went up to possess Ramoth-Gilead. But the Lord gives Ahaz to understand in order to have his (God's) promise fulfilled, he (Ahaz) must believe.

Verse ten, "*Moreover, the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.*"

Here is a tremendous amplitude for choice of a sign where it is to prove a specified thing. But Ahaz seems to be bewildered in what to ask that would be a satisfactory sign, so he concludes not to tempt the Lord by asking a sign. So the Lord grants one gratis. See Isaiah vii. 13-14, Isaiah then says, "*Hear ye now O*

house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign, Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

(15.) "*Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good."*

(16.) "*For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings."*

Now please pay close attention. Ahaz was in sore distress in regard to what these two kings, Rezin, King of Syria, and Pekah, King of Israel, had conspired to do; to make a breach in Judah, and set a king therein. Ahaz does just what all the Kings of Israel and Judah have done for about eight hundred years. Go to a prophet to make inquiry of the Lord, how things are going to turn. Ahaz goes to Isaiah on this same old errand, to see how this impending trouble might terminate.

How could the promise of Christ have been anything pertinent or in any way satisfactory to Ahaz's case.

There is no such promise made, or nothing that can be construed to cover anything of the kind. This sign was meant to assuage Ahaz's immediate trouble. The sign given looks like a very uncertain one to appease one's woe, it reminds me of the boy standing a stick on end to see which way 'twill fall, as I have seen him do to decide which way to go.

A virgin is to bear a son and she is to name him Immanuel. This prophecy does not signify in the least that it is to be a miraculous conception, and when

Ahaz at any time heard of a new born son by a virgin he could have suggested or named this son, and thereby had his sign fulfilled, and thus obtained solace to his fears. 'Tis certain a sign must precede the thing signified, and a virgin to have borne a son whether a miraculous conception or not, seven hundred and fifty years later, could not have answered the conditions of this prophecy: consequently Isaiah never prophesied of Christ; and this much preached of prophecy when the searchlight of reason is brought to bear upon it fades to nothingness.

In Isaiah vii. 3, this forecast is fulfilled or is at least represented to be "*And I (Isaiah) went unto the prophetess, and she conceived and bear a son. Then said the Lord to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz.*" (4.) "*For before the child shall have knowledge to cry my father, and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the King of Assyria.*"

Now here is the fulfillment of this sign. Why God should not have ordered his name Immanuel, is just as much of a mystery as that Mary did not call her first off-spring Immanuel as she should if this prophecy had applied to her.

In either case this prophecy is untrue. The history to which this prophecy refers is recorded in 2 Chron. xxviii. 1-6, "*Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord. Wherefore the Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the King of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them*

captives, and brought them to Damascus. And he was delivered into the hand of the King of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter."

"For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men; because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers."

Is not this a great showing for prophecy as well as conduct for children of one family and these God's chosen people?

Now to show the esteem in which God holds the prophets, see Jer. xxiii. 14-16, *"I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem a horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies; they strengthen also the hands of evil doers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah."*

"Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness (margin, hypocrisy) gone forth into all the land."

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophecy unto you."

Here my friends is what I consider the best advice upon this subject that can be given, let it proceed from whatever source it may. But think of it, this comes directly from headquarters; from God himself: if God has spoken at all in this Bible he speaks here, and this is what he says. To Hearken not unto the words of the prophets when they prophecy unto you.

But I do not expect all will take this good advice, so we must proceed with our review.

The second effort to apply prophecy to Jesus occurs in Matt. ii. 5-6, it says, "*And they said unto him in Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet, and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, art not least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel.*"

In bringing this second effort at applying prophecy to Christ, will make a quotation from the late Moses Hull from his book, "Our Bible, Who Wrote It—When—Where—How."

He says, "This may be true"; that is, Herod may have asked these wise men this question, and, for anything I know to the contrary these wise men may have answered as this writer says; but if they did they were not wise in their answers. Before quoting the prophecy that this writer thinks he quotes, I would like to say that the queer antics of stars had heralded the advent of many Gods and great men long before Jesus was born, and that unless a star by some unstar-like behavior announced the birth of a God, that particular God coming thus unannounced was not considered much as a God.

"Stars had been sent to announce the birth of Harus, of Egypt; Zoroaster, Buddha, Brahma, and even Romulus, and some of the Caesars, before Jesus; and Mohammed after Jesus.

"Now when in the second century after Jesus the decision had been reached to make a God of him, it was necessary to re-introduce these eccentric stars." It is only in this one book of the Bible that these stories are found.

The prophecy that this writer thinks he quotes

(Tries to deceive us with) is found in Micah. v. 2-6, and reads as follows:

"But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah yet of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth; then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel. . . . And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land; and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall he raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men, (eight princes margin) and they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof; thus shall he deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders."

"Was this true of Jesus? Was he a ruler of the people?" The Assyrian came in and destroyed the land of the Jews about the time this prediction was written, but did the Assyrian come into the land, or even threaten the land in the days of Jesus? "Were not the Assyrians in as much subjection to the Romans at that time as were the Jews themselves? Did Jesus deliver the Jews out of the hands of the Assyrians, or of any body? Who and where were the seven shepherds and the eight principal men (princes)? Did Jesus waste the land of the Assyrians and the land of Nimrod?"

The only thing in this whole prediction that could by any possibility apply to Jesus was the fact that he

happened to be born in Bethlehem; but there were thousands of children born there before, and thousands after Jesus; and among all the thousands, not one to whom the prophecy would not apply as well as it applied to Jesus."

In Matt. ii. 14-15, another attempt is made to find a prediction that applies to Jesus. It says, "*When he arose he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt; and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.*"

This quotation is another proof that this blundering, blustering writer or interpolator, knew nothing of what he was writing about. "There is no such prediction as the writer thinks he is quoting. The only thing in the whole Bible that can possibly resemble this quotation in the least is in Hosea. xi. 1-2, which says: "*When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. As they called them so they went from them; and they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images.*"

"The prophet is here referring to the past, that God loved his son, Israel, and called him out of Egypt on purpose so he could enjoy him; and when he got him out of Egypt he went to burning incense to Baalim, and worshipping graven images. I must be allowed to say that Jesus was not guilty. The text had no more reference to Jesus than it had to Gen. Grant or President McKinley."

"The next effort of this writer to find or make a fulfillment of prophecy is found in Matt. ii. 17-18, which

says: "*Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they are not.*"

Now turn to Jer. xxxi. 15-17, and it will be seen that after the prophet uses the language above quoted he says:

"Thus saith the Lord, refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears, for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end saith the Lord; thy children shall come again in their own border."

In verse twenty-three he says, "*As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah, and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity.*"

Why did Rachel, that is, Mother's in Israel weep? Not because their children were killed in and around Bethlehem, but because they were in captivity in Babylon—the land of their enemies. Why was she asked to refrain her voice from weeping and her eyes from tears? Not because the dead children should return to their mothers, but, because the children of Israel should return from Babylon, the land of the enemy. As in verse thirty-one, They should turn again to these cities. Verse twenty-three promises that their captivity shall end and they shall use certain speeches in the land of Judah.

There is only one more effort to make prophecy fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. Matt. ii. 23, has the

following: "*And he came and dwelt in the city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets. He shall be called a Nazarene.*"

This perhaps more than any other text displays the ignorance of the interpolator. There is no such prophecy as this writer supposes he is quoting.

In Judges xii. 5, a prediction is made to Mrs. Manoah concerning her son Samson, which says, "*No razor shall come on his head; for he shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb.*"

The one who wrote the text in Matthew did not know the difference between a Nazarite and a Nazarene. The words sound a little alike, and that was enough in the estimation of the monk who wrote this to make the fulfillment of prophecy. If the reader will turn and read the first twelve verses of the sixth chapter of Numbers, he will find what a Nazarite is and how he must live. A Nazarene was one who dwelt at Nazareth. Samson was to be a Nazarite from his birth. This writer got an inkling of the text, and, moved by the sound of the words, rather than by sense, he hastened to apply it to Jesus, because he spent a few years of his childhood in Nazareth.

I am not more astonished at the ignorance and audacity of this writer, than I am at the ignorance or perverseness of the clergy, who for centuries have allowed these New Testament expositions of the prophecies of the Old to go unchallenged.

We will not follow Mr. Hull any farther. I would recommend his book *Our Bible*, etc., to all who would care to push their investigation farther along this line.

I am glad Mr. Hull, among the rest, refers to this attempted prophecy relating to Jesus' sojourn at Nazareth; because I had spoken of this and it shows it has been observed by more than one.

There is, however, one exception I would note in this quotation from Mr. Hull. He alleges these pretended old prophecies of Jesus to the ignorance of the writer of this book of Matthew. I do not look at it altogether in this way: my best guess is that this writer was not as ignorant, as he was unprincipled and dishonest: and that he placed great confidence in the ignorance and gullibility of those expected to pay for this pretended unfoldment of Gods word and plan.

I also hold a better opinion of the intelligence of the clergy of to-day, than to think that they believe, that these pretended Old prophecies relate in the least to the Christ of the New Testament. The fund upon which they for centuries have been doing business is this same, ignorance and gullibility, and is it not remarkable how this fund holds out? The begging that has been done from these Old Testament prophecies to substantiate the claims of the New is pitiable to say the least.

Now let us consider this portion of the Old Testament called the prophecies as a whole. These prophecies properly begin at Isaiah: a little more than one fourth of the Old Testament is occupied by these prophecies: you can see the amount the theologian makes use of in predicting of Jesus, a few extraneous sentences; next to nothing; and what is selected when put to an honest test sinks to nothingness.

These prophecies were not written until after the

Jewish captivity began according to the record, and then it seems that these poor Jewish monks had no other pastime than to prophesy.

Now we will make a few promiscuous selections from Isaiah. He is considered one of the greater prophets. See Isaiah i. 18, God here says through this prophet, *"Come and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool."* Now God here asks us to reason together with him, and then immediately says that which is wholly unreasonable, and proceeds to contradict himself pointedly in verse twenty of the same chapter, he says, *"But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."*

Now turn to Isaiah iii. 16-26, *"Moreover the Lord saith; Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a twinkling with their feet; Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, the chains and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets and the earrings, the rings and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples and the crisping pins. The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods and the vails."*

"And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girdling of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty.

"Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war. And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground."

Is it not astonishing how God's mind is occupied between times?

Again see Isaiah xxviii. 6-8, *"And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate. But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment."* God says through his best prophet, that the prophets err in consequence of drunkenness! This would not be an irrational conclusion, had he not have made this admission himself that these prophecies sound more like the gibbering of drunkenness than anything else that can be named.

See Isaiah xlii. 13, *"The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war, he shall cry, yea roar, he shall prevail against his enemies."* Thirteen of same chapter, *"Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? Who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant?"* If Isaiah is not meant here, who is it?

See xliii. 3, Isaiah, "*For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy one of Israel, thy Savior.*"

Here God makes the unqualified declaration that he is the Holy One of Israel and the Savior. While the clergy would make you believe that here is meant the Messiah of the New Testament.

Verses ten and eleven reinforces this declaration "*Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord and my servant whom I have chosen; (Isaiah) that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he; before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I even I am the Lord and beside me there is no savior.*"

Here is prophecy that cannot well be misunderstood. Here God implies that before he commenced business there was no God, and after he has run his race we will have to go it alone. And that he is the only Savior and he declares in full measure, that we need look for no other. Or is this where Orthodoxy postulates the necessity of their Triune God or three Gods in one.

CHAPTER XXIII

We will now turn to Isaiah xlv. 1, "*Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus (King of Persia) whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him.*"

King Cyrus is God's anointed in this case, and this is what you will find is meant every time by this expression "the Lord's anointed" that it means some of the kings at the time named.

Napoleon Bonaparte is said to have said, That he

had discovered that God was on the side where they had the best guns; and here we have proof of this from one of the greatest prophets, that this is true. Here God has forgotten and forsaken Israel, and has taken off his coat and gone to work with all his might for Cyrus, King of Persia.

In this same chapter (verse seven,) "*I form the light, and create the darkness; I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things.*"

This certainly exonerates the Orthodox Devil of a vast deal that is laid to his charge; for here God owns up that he is at the bottom of the whole business.

We will now examine a few texts from tearful Jeremiah.

See Jer. v. 30-31, "*A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?*" Here is a text that should be preached from by the clergy. It applies both to the prophet and priest and might be extended to the politician. It hints that the prophecies are not altogether reliable; we get to this effect very frequently, and when coupled with the whole mass this is by far the most rational conclusion.

Now turn to Jer. xlviii. 10, "*Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be who keepeth back his sword from blood.*"

How does this tally with these prophets who are claimed to be predicting the advent of a Junior God; the Prince of Peace.

As there is nothing in the prophecy of Jeremiah

that the gospel writers can torture into anything that heralds Christ, we must let it pass.

Jeremiah was in close confinement during pretty much the whole time we have any account of him, because he did not prophesy to the satisfaction of the Jews. And at one time was let down into a dungeon by a rope where the floor was soft mud.

A eunuch servant who seems to have had more humanity than the rest, interceded and obtained permission, then shouted down this shaft, instructed Jeremiah to put some rags under his arms to prevent the cord from cutting and then drew him out. Zedekiah then wanted some advice from the Lord, in regard to how the Chaldeans were going to behave toward him and his people. Jeremiah instructs him that his only salvation laid in making a clean surrender to the Chaldeans—as he had told him before—Zedekiah then instructs him to deceive the people in regard to this communication which Jeremiah readily does.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah we must pass. It would seem a fitting place to have pronounced them when he was down this dungeon in the mud, had there have been a stenographer at the top to have recorded them.

This brings us to the prophecies of Ezekiel. The Lord has complained that the prophets have erred in consequence of strong drink, but I should say in this case of Ezekiel, that it is a pronounced case of jim jams in its most aggravated form, and that Ezekiel should have been hastened to the Keely cure as fast as they could have sped. The whole mess is senseless drivel, and to build a religion even though the most

unreasonable I do not see where stuff like this can apply. If any would take exception to what I have said, please read the first chapter wherein is described Ezekiel's wheel, with all its appurtenances, and then ponder the mysteries of Godliness. Then turn to chapter iv. 10-15, where God thinks he would enjoy seeing Ezekiel eat human excrement before the public.

In Ezekiel xxxvii. is a mess of incongruity which aids in building the doctrine or belief of the resurrection of the body, or what is taught as the general resurrection. This belief has a considerable of a following and there have been many publications given to the world and a great many scares in consequence of these writers fixing a definite time when the "world was coming to its end." I remember well when I was a small boy, that one of these dates matured and it was much talked, and the mental suffering I endured that day made an indelible impress upon my mind that still remains. I remember well it was a windy day, and when there came a high breeze which I would hear in the wood I thought my time was up. Many years after, when I had grown to mature manhood, I read a book written by one Charles T. Russel, called "The Millennial Dawn," on the general resurrection, or the "second coming of Christ."

I studied this book thoroughly, and searched the Scripture and for a time thought perhaps, as he declared he had been led into the unfathomable mysteries of Godliness by the Spirit that his interpretation and his book might be true, and the key to this great problem of mystery.

That all the inhabitants of earth who had been put

to sleep in what looked like so unjust a manner, were to be awakened refreshed, taught by Christ the ways of righteousness for one thousand years. Then the Devil was to be unchained for a little season, and was to try his racket on each man and woman individually, instead of giving him such an opportunity as he had with father Adam and mother Eve, to damn the whole race by damning these two.

That those who fail to withstand after the thousand years of Christ's teaching, this Devil's second deal, death overtakes and these are dead for all eternity. The others inherit the earth and Christ returns to the Father. The little flock, or those who partake of the first resurrection spoken of in John the Revelator, retain the rulership for ever and ever. This earth then becomes their heaven. The wicked must be again entombed, but whether they are to be revered enough to have a tombstone, doth not appear. But the righteous can praise God to all eternity. I once considered this doctrine seriously, but had to abandon it upon investigation because my mind would not stand the strain.

Just recently there came out another book upon this school of thought, entitled "The Coming King," by one, Mr. White, which parallels Mr. Russel's book so closely that comment on one applies to the other.

Now as it is the prophets we are studying, will make a quotation from Ezekiel, which I think is the only thing in the Old Testament that can possibly be construed to touch upon the resurrection. What then is in the New we will study when we get there. See Ezekiel xxxvii., beginning at the first of chapter: *"The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me*

out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about; and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man can these bones live? And I answered, O, Lord God thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O, ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army."

This prophecy applies only to the house of Israel; here is no promise to the Gentiles that they are to have any part in this resurrection.

When we take into consideration the meaningless, incongruous jargon that makes up this book of Ezekiel, this wild vision of this valley of dry bones leaves

us a mighty slimsy hope of a resurrection were there nothing else known upon which to rest a hope of another life, or continued life.

Friends, I have no less faith in this doctrine of the general resurrection of the body when Gabriel blows his horn than I have to any of the orthodox creeds. I freely own that this is the only life we have ever tried, and if this could be permanent, and sickness and pain were unknown, and we could have things as we think they should be, the most of us would vote to stay rather than take the chance of what may lay beyond this life. But here we have no option; so let us toil on. Whether the resurrection of the body be true or no, we will let Ezekiel rest.

Our investigation now brings us to the prophet Daniel.

The only way I can look at this book of Daniel is that it has been a prize story; that at some time in some ancient school there has been a prize awarded to the one who could weave the best piece of fiction, with Israel's God for the subject. I think the author of Daniel has won the first prize, and the author of the book of Jonah has won the second, and these two pieces of literature have found their way into the Bible. That the book of Daniel is pseudonymous, and is entirely disjointed from all the rest of the Biblical connections except the Jewish captivity, is painfully apparent to the one who may wish to believe, and strikingly so to the one in search of the truth.

Now, if the reader cares to take pains to look it up, you will find the close of Nebuchadnezzar's reign

recorded in 2 Kings xxv. 27-30. You can then turn to Jer. lii. 31-34, and you will find the same thing recorded again in the same language, or the same words. That Evil-merodach succeeds Nebuchadnezzar: and if Nebuchadnezzar was turned out to grass for seven years and then reinstated upon the throne, here would certainly have been the time to have recorded this strange history.

This story of Daniel is not written as if the writer had any thought that it was to be believed. It sounds as though it had been done to amuse children, and make them laugh, because of the ludicrousness of the tale. Now here in the case of this first wonder which Daniel did, to tell the King his dream which he had forgotten, and then give the wonderful interpretation. The King allows he is converted to Israel's God clear through, that there never was another such a God as this God of Daniel's, and then the very next thing we hear, he is just as much of a heathen again as ever, and Daniel has got to go at it and convert him all over again.

History repeats itself; this is what the Israelites did continually. Now, right on the heels of Neb's conversion and his acknowledgment of the greatness of Daniel's God, just for a moment consider the dimensions of this image of gold that this King has erected in the plain of Dura. Ninety-five feet high and nine feet square nearly (see description). This huge shaft of gold the King has placed on end, with the decree that when certain musical instruments are twanged, all his subjects must fall down and worship this image.—This, perchance, is where the worship of gold had its initiative, which extends to our time.—When certain of his

subjects inform the King that certain Jews whom he has exalted had not worshiped according to his law, he, in a fit of rage and fury, commands them brought before him; he then repeats his decree and tells them that failure to render obedience means that they are to be cast into a fiery furnace made exceedingly hot. They remind the King of their God as the true and living God, and to whom all worship is due. This Nebuchadnezzar had just acknowledged was the true and only God; nevertheless, after a certain amount of bantering, he has them, three, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, by name, cast into this furnace, made seven times hotter than ever before.

When this King saw them enjoying themselves in this furnace, walking to and fro with the fourth one, the King is again mightily astonished, and is converted the second time and again speaks in unmeasured terms of the greatness of Israel's wonder-working God, and has these three Hebrews promoted. He then, in due time, goes to sleep and dreams again of an immense and wonderful tree, the significance of which his magicians, soothsayers, and astrologers could not make plain—what such a tremendously widespread tree might mean. So Daniel was sent for again. This dream puzzles Daniel for one hour; but the King assures him of success, and to have patience. Then Daniel, with God's help, told the King that this big tree stood for or represented the King himself, his prowess; that it was to be cut down, but the stump was to remain alive until seven times passed; that he (the King) was to be reduced to a state of beasthood and subsist on grass seven years, and be wet by the dew of heaven, and the

rain and snow, until the expiration of this time, and then he was to be reinstated again upon his throne. This did not seem to impress Neb' very profoundly, for one year later we find him boasting in an undue manner of his prowess; but before the boast was finished there came a voice from heaven, "saying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, thy kingdom is departed from thee": so this same hour was this thing fulfilled, and Nebuchadnezzar found himself driven out into the wilds, where he ate grass as mindless as a cow-kine, as Daniel predicted to him, till his hair was grown as eagles' feathers, and his nails as birds' claws.

Then, at the end of this time, he lifted his eyes to heaven and his understanding returned: and he blessed the most high. Just hear what he says after his metamorphosis (Daniel iv. 36, 37): "*At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honor and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all his works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.*"

Is there pleasure in believing this book of Daniel?

Between chapters four and five in this book of Daniel there is a hiatus; the chronologer places it at thirty-one years; but he has no more authority for this than have we. How this comes about we cannot tell: whether it was the taste of the writer to leave this gap, or whether there has been valuable matter lost to the world, or whether some of the councils clothed with

godly authority have concluded there was a quantity of this book that was not of God, we cannot tell, but I think we have plenty of this prophecy left with us.

In chapter five is recorded Belshazzar's historic feast. The wonders accompanying this feast have been a theme for the poet's muse and the painter's brush; they have been set to song and chanted by the choir of the sanctuary. This feast has many times been the text for the eloquent preacher, and has without doubt been the means of converting many a sinner and bringing him into the fold of God.

Spiritualists have also made use of this marvelous hand that wrote this strange communication upon this palace wall to help bridge the chasm between ancient and modern Spiritualism.

But Reason says, while this account may be indirectly of some value to the cause of Truth, but it is chained to so much that Truth and Reason must reject, that this hand that wrote this strange message that none but Daniel could read, must be relegated to the realm of fiction.

The most rational conclusion that we can arrive at is that the author of this book of Daniel has drawn from the school of those whom Israel's God has so detested, those who held communication with familiar spirits, and in this way phenomena of this nature was known to be, and he has woven this phenomenon into his legend.

This book of Daniel is a strange quantity, and one to study it carefully, if not blinded by bigotry, finds his mind divided between two opinions: First, that the author in his blind zeal has concluded that God after

the Jewish captivity had not been held up in the light that he should be before the world, and that the old-time wonders were growing dim, and there was need of some fresh reminders—some stunners of miracles for the kings that had made them captive, to show the world that Israel's God was yet alive and doing business, even though his chosen had been reduced to slavery. Either this, or it was written as a burlesque on the behavior of Israel's God and the Old Testament miracles. Did the author ever anticipate that this production of his would ever be believed? Could he ever have dreamed of what its future might be? In the book of Ezra is the account of the kings Darius and Cyrus, but not one thing in this book of Ezra or any portion of the Scripture is Daniel mentioned outside of this book bearing his name.

Nebuchadnezzar's reign ends, according to 2 Kings xxv. 27, 588 a. c., and his successor ascends to the throne. But this is not Belshazzar, his son, nor is there any such king spoken of in this connection.

It is apparent that Belshazzar was created only to figure in this episode, and then sinks into "innocuous desuetude." In proof of this, please read the last chapter of 2 Chronicles and the first chapter of Ezra.

Belshazzar was slain and Darius assumes rule of the kingdom. Then observe the paltriness that follows, which results in King Darius' conversion. How by subterfuge Daniel, in consequence of his fidelity to Israel's God, is cast into a den of lions. God sends his angel and seals the lions' mouths, so Daniel is not harmed. Now consider, Darius has Daniel removed from this

dangerous place and his accusers are served to the same "sass," not only his accusers, but their wives and children. Then God's angel unmuzzles these lions and the people are reduced to smithereens ere they reach the bottom of the den. Just think of it, their wives and children had to be cast in, so that the Scripture can be given to us in good measure. There has in all of these accounts got to be a vast amount of innocence sacrificed, or this God does not seem satisfied.

After this tragedy of the lions, King Darius is converted. See Dan. vi. 25-28: "*Then King Darius wrote unto all people, nations and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and steadfast forever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the den of the lions. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.*"

It would seem from this text that King Darius, through faith derived from "Daniel and the den of lions," makes and issues a decree that is to settle the God question for all.

See Daniel vi. 25, 26: "*Then King Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; . . . I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel.*" Does it appear that this has been fulfilled?

The book of Daniel is a gratuitous offering: by whom, we never may know; and the wonder stories and prophecies Reason must reject with all the rest, as well as the God they were written to magnify and extol.

The greatest joy I find in the study of the Scripture and in the prophecies is that there is nothing to them that helps substantiate this world-wide and century-spanning delusion. The prophecies refer to nothing that is claimed of them—that a Messiah or Savior is promised. The present situation and a prognostication as to how they are to get out of their present dilemma is all that any of them were at the time prophesying about, and we are deceived when we believe anything to the contrary. Leaving prophecies of Christ entirely out of the question, if you strike a text that may read rational now and then, it will immediately be tenfold offset by that which contradicts in language the most absurd and irrational. For example, turn to Hosea xii. 6, 7: *“Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually. He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand: he loveth to oppress.”*

Here is another example from this same prophet (Hosea xiii. 16): *“Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces and their women with child shall be ripped up.”* This is a fair sample of God’s love and mercy throughout the whole of this Old Testament, or the Jews’ Bible. As I may have said, I still say that there is not a single sentence in these prophecies that predicts of a

Messiah or Savior, such as orthodoxy is preaching of to-day.

CHAPTER XXIV

The prophets, some of them, prophesied of a king to rule Israel; this would seem but natural, that they were in captivity. This is what the Jews of our time claim, that this is all that is meant by the prophecies; and why have not they the best right to interpret their own Bible?

This Old Testament could be no more to us Gentiles than is the Al Koran or the Zend-avesta or the Chinese Bible, were it not that the Catholic priesthood, when they concluded to deify Jesus Christ, thought it would strengthen their claim to have him heralded by prophecy, and these old Jewish records happened to be the thing at hand, as they were so incongruous and admitted of so much duplicity that they could be made to prophesy of most anything one might wish, they were therefore chosen.

I would feel perfectly safe and perfectly willing to challenge the Pope himself, or any orthodox churchman, of whatever creed, or however broad his phylacteries or the hem of his garments, however many theological schools he may have graduated from, or however many theological seminaries he has stood at the head of, that he cannot find one sentence among what are called the prophecies, or in the whole of the Old Testament, for that matter, that Reason can construe that any such personage as Jesus Christ is referred to or thought of. Then, I would ask, what does this Old Testament Scripture amount to? Not one thing that

is claimed for it. As strange as it may seem, the very thing that this jealous, vindictive God has centered his Godship against is the only thing of any value, and this he denounces or abnegates under restrictions of death, from Genesis to Malachi. That is the school to whom the woman of En-dor and Huldah the prophetess belonged. Speaking of challenging the educated churchman, the truth is, the higher he is learned the farther he would be from accepting any such challenge. When he has investigated along these lines carefully he would be more liable to assume the position of Prof. Foster, whom I made mention of a few pages back; or he will commence to shout as did the Greeks of old, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," and kick up such an orthodox dust that he is lost in the cloud, till Reason concludes not to waste ammunition by random shots.

Now, from Daniel to the conclusion of the Jews' portion there are twelve of these alleged prophecies remaining, called the lesser prophets. If they are the mouthpiece to this same God, I see no propriety in calling them lesser prophets, only as they are less prolix than the ones we have mentioned.

We must of necessity let them pass; they contain nothing that I feel that I need to make use of on my side of the argument, and I do not see how they can be of any use to my friends, the enemy, on the other side. For a purpose, however, I do need to make a brief mention of one of these prophets, Jonah. This story of Jonah and the whale has given birth to a proverb, that when a thing is told that sounds incred-

ulous, the rejoinder is that it sounds "fishy"—referring to Jonah and the whale. This story of Jonah nobody of any thought pretends to believe, and when this falls, his whole prophecy must fall. This story of Jonah and Nineveh, however, teaches the best moral of anything in the Old Scripture, from my viewpoint. Here in this case God did forgive, and gave his reason for it—because there must have been so many innocent to suffer if Jonah's prophecy had been fulfilled.

But what I wished to speak of here is that some time since I read a long and learned lecture by a highly educated churchman, his subject being "The Divinity of Christ," and this being based upon his miracles. After he felt that he had established his claim, he then proceeds to impress upon his hearers that the Old Testament miracles are all solved because Christ accepts them all; he rejects none. And if we believe in Christ, it follows we must believe whatever he believed, and since Christ quotes these miracles promiscuously, we are in duty bound to believe them all, Jonah in the whale's belly included. See Matt. xii. 40: "*For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*"

Now, reader, I do not believe Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, even though the writer of this book of Matthew makes Christ say so.

I would be pleased to take up the New Testament examination now, but there are a few books of the Old that I must speak of first. We will now let the prophets rest, only as we may refer to them from the New Testament.

This brings us back to the books of Chronicles. Chronicles has been spoken of, and we cannot take up the time much farther with these two books. It is impossible to know who the author of these two books is, or why they should have been written, or why they should have been included in the canon: they certainly add nothing to the strength of the claim. It is the same account given us in another dress, or, rather, a synoptic of the account up to the time of Ezra. There is much disparity between the two accounts. There is one thing I would call your attention to. See 2 Chron. xxi. 15 to 20, and xxii. 1, 2. By carefully reading this account you will see that Ahaziah is two years older than his father, Jehoram. The Master says all things are possible with God; but I would ask, Can God make a son older than his father?

EZRA.—The book of Ezra contains an account where the Jews return from Babylon to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple and repair the city under permit by Cyrus, King of Persia. There is nothing in this book that bears any relevancy to the case, so we will dismiss it.

NEHEMIAH.—The book of Nehemiah contains nothing that can militate against our claim or for our opposers. It narrates upon the rededication of the temple and the wall of Jerusalem, and to a closer observance of the law of Moses; of divorcing themselves from their strange wives, which was thought to be the cause of their afflictions. See xiii. 26, 27: "*Did not Solomon King of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was be-*

loved of his God, and God made him King over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin. Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?" We will leave the reader to make his or her own comment upon this.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER.—This book can in no way be particularly essential to our work, as the word God does not once occur in the whole book: and since God is not named, I do not see why we should take up valuable time with this book. It is a silly, unreasonable narrative; it is, however, unique in one respect: it is a Bible narrative with the miraculous left entirely out, and I do not see why the Bible-builders should have thought this book anything that could enhance the value of their claim.

Vashti, King Ahasuerus' wife, who refused to come before the King to display her beauty, near the close of his seven days' debauch, is the one most worthy of admiration in this story. The morals of this book are exceedingly bad; but is the Old Testament a place to look for good morals? This book of Esther has been woven into nursery stories and taught to the little boys and girls, how beautiful was Esther and how great her fidelity for her race, until it is needless for me to dilate upon it here, since it is valueless on either side of the case.

JOB.—The next book to pass under review is Job. The book of Job does not properly belong to the Bible. The book of Job is an allegory. The God spoken of

in Job is no relation to Israel's God—at least, if they are related, it is very distant. To believe this book of Job literally one has necessarily got to admit of a plurality of Gods, and Job's God has a plurality of sons; while the orthodox God has only one begotten Son, and God and this Son are one and inseparable. The book of Job is said to be the oldest book of the Bible. I do not see anything throughout the whole story of Job that warrants any such conclusion. There is not one sentence or phrase that affords one iota of data to serve as a guide whether this book was written fifteen hundred and twenty years before Christ, as the chronologers have fixed it, or several hundred years after. Job hails from the land of Uz; where Uz is, I must acknowledge my ignorance; it may have been a state in the lost Atlantis for aught I know. Did the chronologer know of this land, and the corner where Job's plantation lay, and did he have a history of Uz? If so, he should have made a footnote of it, so we all might better understand. This land is not spoken of again in the whole Bible, I do not think, nor have I ever heard of such a country except in connection with this book, Job. The God of Job averages better than Israel's Jehovah; he forbade the Devil or Satan from quenching the vital spark, otherwise he could toy with Job to his heart's content. This looks cruel, but God seemed to think as did Shakespeare, "All's well that ends well." So God has Job reinstated in great shape; he doubles all his live stock, but his first seven sons and three seem to be irretrievably lost. This does not look like a fair deal with them, but Job is placated with the same number of new sons and daughters, and

these were likely just twice as good as the first lot; this at least is necessary to have it all tally.

When Job is at his very worst, God seems to have two varminths that he desires to impress upon Job's mind that are indeed terrible to contemplate. His "Behemoth" and his "Leviathan" would certainly be terrible to encounter, and I hope I will never have to face them, and I have no particular fear that I ever will.

The learned vicar has been known to stand before his congregation and instruct them that there never was such a personage as Job: and when Job goes, the whole story must of necessity follow, so all we have remaining is the moral of the strain, which is of but little worth.

The book of Job, the truth-seeker will observe, is but a piece of fiction, and when it was written or by whom can make no difference to us, any more than does the story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves"; nor is the moral as good.

THE PSALMS.—We are now up against the Psalms. Without doubt, if the question was asked all the Sunday school scholars throughout Christendom, "Who wrote the Psalms?" the answer would invariably be, "David." This the investigator will discover is a mistake; because these psalms cover the whole epoch from the time David commenced to make history to the time the Jews return from Babylon to repair the temple and the broken wall of Jerusalem, five hundred and sixty-one years after David's time, according to the marginal dates; so this must eliminate or relieve David

from a large portion of this work. There are one hundred and fifty of these Psalms; it is not probable to my mind that David ever wrote one of them. The one who reads the history of David would not discover one thing that could lead him to think he was ever engaged in writing songs. It is evident they have been written, but by whom, nobody can tell. It has been thought by some that where it reads at the headings, "A Song of David," that the correct statement would read, "A Psalm to David," which sounds much more rational, as it has always been the lot of kings to have in their train those who are trying to pander for favors from the throne; or David may have had a poet laureate to write odes for him, as have kings in our time.

These Psalms are a large collection of songs, all that could be gathered together at the time of the building of the canon. And who the composers were can make no difference to us. They are of no consequence to prove the Bible a revelation of God, no more than the same number of hymns and national songs of the present day would be. So we must let them remain and let the good church people enjoy them.

We are now up to the literature of "Solomon the Wise." Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Solomon's Song are all ascribed to Solomon. We are taught from the catechism that Solomon is the wisest man recorded in the Scripture. The religious enthusiast may still tell you that Solomon is the wisest man the world has ever known. Do these three books impress you that this is so? There are a few sayings among his proverbs that may rise to the level of mediocrity, but the greater

portion of his proverbs fall far below the line. He, however, recommends us in the pursuit of wisdom, and this is well; but does his conduct prove that he practiced what he recommends? King Solomon's advice on the woman question makes one think of a reformed drunkard lecturing on temperance. He no doubt speaks from experience.

King Solomon's second literary effort is Ecclesiastes. It appears from the first verse of this book that Solomon did some preaching between times, with all the rest. This verse says, "*The words of the preacher, the son of David, King in Jerusalem.*" None but Solomon answers to this description. And what does Solomon preach, what doctrine? He preaches stark materialism. Though God made this free donation of superior wisdom, so he was the admiration among the kings and queens of the world; but just think of it—he preaches unadulterated materialism!

In his proverbs he recommends wisdom, but when he stands up in the pulpit he tells us all is vanity and vexation of spirit. See i. 13-18. King Solomon's materialism is not sweetened with one ray of hope of a hereafter. This is worse than Thomas Paine or R. G. Ingersoll. They both expressed a hope of a future life, but Solomon none. They are anathematized by orthodoxy as hell-doomed infidels, while King Solomon's memory passes adown the corridors of time as the world's wisest man. I will give you a text which is the keynote of his preaching. See ix. 5, 6: "*For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love*

and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished: neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun."

He continued in this same strain to the last two verses of his discourse. If it is one sermon, it is rather prolix, but not longer than has many times been reeled off. These last two verses of Ecclesiastes one cannot help but observe is an interpolation; that is, another writer or preacher has concluded that King Solomon's sermon needed a nub at the conclusion of some other different material.

Whoever wrote the book of Ecclesiastes none may know; Solomon may have written it. It certainly is not a piece of literature that I should suppose any of the old saints would contend for. How much revelation of God it contains is the only part that can interest us. How much does it, think ye?

King Solomon concludes his literary career with a canticle. Was this sung at the close of his sermon? It is christened "The Song of Songs." 1 Kings iv. 32 says, "*He spake three thousand proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five.*" One of these songs finds its way into the Bible as a part of God's revelation to man. This, we have a right to presume, is his best song, else the Bible-builders have made a grave blunder in their choice. The question that suggests itself is, what could the other thousand and four have been like? As a literary effort, I do not think I ever saw or heard of its being excelled for idiotic drivel. The thing about this "song of songs" that makes it interesting to the investigator is the headings of the seven sections of this canticle. Here are the headings

of the first chapter of the King James version: "*The church's love unto Christ; (5) she confesseth her deformity; (7) and prayeth to be directed to his flock; (8) Christ directeth her to the shepherds' tents; (9) and shewing his love to her; (11) giveth her gracious promises; (12) the church and Christ congratulate one another.*"

There are seven of these chapters, which necessitates that this falsehood and deception may be multiplied by seven that the aggregate may be reached. The author of this canticle had no more thought of Christ or the church and refers to it no more than did the author of "Barbara Allen." The lesson to be drawn from Solomon's song is the way things have been tortured and strained to have Christ heralded by the Old Testament Scripture. Even Solomon, the idolator, the libertine, the materialist, is here, in this idiotic drivel, made to prophesy of Christ, which is enough to make the churchman blush, if he has any sense of the ludicrous. If the Bible-makers would pervert things and try to deceive in this glaring, flagrant manner here, what more faith can we have or what more need we to expect from them throughout what are called the prophecies, and all the rest of the Old Testament as well?

Whether Solomon wrote this song or not can make no difference to us. What arouses wonder is that any council, clothed with authority to accept or reject matter included in this canon, should have been so wanting in judgment as to have accepted this. But, reader, this same conclusion applies to every book of the Old Testament. Where is the book, I would ask, that Rea-

son would say should be retained? Not one book, nor one chapter, nor one sentence, would Reason say has God had any more to do with than any other literary production upon the face of the earth! One more word about Solomon: If any of the characters of the Old Testament ever communed with God in person, Solomon did, according to the account; and what he asked was wisdom, and this is what God is said to have granted, and this is what we have to show for it—his record, his proverbs, his sermon, or Ecclesiastes, and his song. What think ye? Now we are up to Isaiah, the first of the prophets. Our examination is in on the prophets. So this brings us to the New Testament.

CHAPTER XXV

THE NEW TESTAMENT—Or what is meant is the New Covenant, and the word covenant, according to Webster, means bargain.

So what is meant is the New Bargain. Now the thing for us to do is to analyze this bargain, that we may thoroughly understand it and see if we really wish to become partisans in this deal. Now, my dear friends, there are a few things at the beginning of this examination upon which we all should agree.

If this New Testament is an imposition, and if upon investigation it proves itself unworthy of belief and shows itself a priestly fraud, can there be any reason why we should not be unanimous in denouncing it as such? If, on the other hand, it withstands every reasonable argument brought to bear against it, then we

should all believe and shape our lives according to its teachings.

I well understand I am dealing with a delicate subject, one that is interwoven into the whole social fabric, so that it looks to many like sacrilege to speak in terms the least derogatory. The mystic chords of memory reaching back to the father's benediction and the mother's prayer are ties upon which fond memory reposes, and, like Eliza Cook's old arm-chair, "They are bound by a thousand bands to the heart, not a tie will break, not a link will start."

To write or speak inimical of the teaching or of the Scripture of this New Testament looks to a great many good people like "vandalism." It looks akin to coming into your home with torch and ax, and ruthlessly destroying all held dear and sacred, and then for the destroyer to look upon the ruin he has wrought with a sneer of contempt. This is a mistake, dear reader: just as much a mistake as when the Christian missionary works to convert the heathen Chinese by placating him with the Christian religion in place of his joss-worship.

What we should all welcome and accept and diligently search for is the Truth. Truth and Reason do not collide, they are ever in harmony. Truth is the guiding star of hope, and Reason points you to this star.

Here is a thing I have said, but will repeat it here: "However great the following error may have been, and however long it may have held possession in the human heart, this can never make it true." Suppose for a time in regard to this New Testament Scripture

you are deceived. Suppose, though your pastor has repeatedly announced this solemn declaration: That were it not for Christ's teachings, his crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, the world would be without one ray of light or hope of immortality, and that through Christ is life and immortality brought to light. These are mistakes, and are terribly misleading, as I will be glad to show you when we have worked our way up and removed the obstructions so we can obtain a clearer view.

The agnostic skeptic has never been able to discover in the Scripture, neither the Old or New, anything but consummate fraud. I do not look upon the Scripture in this light, as I have before said; and while I find but little, yet there is enough to afford a clew, and this I consider of very great importance.

We stand upon the line that cuts the two eternities, the eternal future and the eternal past: the pages of the past eternity have been written; and we are all making history as the sands of time flow from the future to the past. Are we benefited by what has been written? Most certainly we are, were it not for the knowledge, the experience and accumulated thoughts of the ages past, we would still be in the state of the primitive man.

I do not expect to give you one original thought. It is from those who have thought before that enables me to indite these thoughts. But there is a power called discrimination which enables man to select from the vast accumulation of what has been recorded upon the scroll of the past eternity that which appeals to Reason, and can be proved by palpable demonstration,

and to reject error and falsehood by applying the test of present-day logic.

It should ever be borne in mind that Faith, and Belief, and Love, are things over which we have no control: these are emotions that own and possess us, not we them.

The New Testament, though we have shown is built upon a false foundation and bolstered by a series of miracles and wonders that the power of discrimination and Reason tell us never happened; but, notwithstanding all this, it contains a modicum of data that is of great value to the searcher of Truth. I shall hope to speak of this more fully when I get up to it.

The New Testament, we are taught, is a fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old. If this is so, it must follow the fate of that upon which it was founded. That there ever was such a person as Jesus Christ has been a question much in dispute in ages past, and this question is not yet settled; and, from the nature of the case, can it ever be? This does not particularly matter. I believe there was a man about this time—a Jewish reformer—who taught a doctrine inimical to the Jewish traditions; and if this were so, from what we have learned of the Jews, if they were clothed with power to execute or crucify one of their own for apostacizing from their creed, they would not hesitate one minute to do it. So this much we may then believe: that there was a man by that name about that time crucified. This is nothing pertinent to the case, as there have been thousands of martyrs, and all without doubt had a name.

The Christ question resolves itself into this: The

story of Eden, that we are all damned or doomed to death and hell through our first parents' disobedience, must from the evidence be lopped off. The claim that Christ was predicted by the Old Testament prophecies we have also got to lop off as untenable from failure of proof. So if this marvelous man came, as these Gospels claim, he came unannounced; and what he is said to have said and done, and whether it is believable and of great value to the world, we have these Gospels alone to guide us in our deliberations.

Here is a self-evident proposition:

1. That all the parts of a story may agree, yet the whole story may be false.

2. That all the parts of a story may agree, and the whole story may be true.

3. But if all the parts of a story do not agree, it is evident that the story is not all true, and where the parts are all unreasonable we are justified in rejecting the whole.

Now, the first thing that presents itself in the Gospel ascribed to Matthew is what is called the genealogy of Christ. There has been a great effort made to preserve the lineage of Christ from David; so the first chapter of Matthew starts off by giving the genealogy of Abraham to Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Christ.

Now, this shows that they have changed their plan from the one at the outset, or they would have traced this genealogy to Mary instead of Joseph; by tracing it to Joseph, since Christ has no earthly father, puts Christ entirely out of the reckoning, and all of this research redounds to the negative side of the proposi-

tion. This genealogy is given again by Luke, from Joseph to Adam.

Now we will place these genealogies against each other for the purpose of perspicuity and comparison, beginning in both cases with Joseph.

CHRIST

2 Joseph	23 Neri
3 Heli	24 Melchi
4 Matthat	25 Adeli
5 Levi	26 Cosam
6 Melchi	27 Elmodam
7 Jauna	28 Er
8 Joseph	29 Jose
9 Mattathias	30 Eliezer
10 Amos	31 Jorim
11 Naum	32 Matthat
12 Esli	33 Levi
13 Nagge	34 Simeon
14 Maath	35 Juda
15 Mattathias	36 Joseph
16 Semei	37 Jonan
17 Joseph	38 Eliakim
18 Juda	39 Melea
19 Joanna	40 Menan
20 Rhesa	41 Mattatha
21 Zorobabel	42 Nathan
22 Salathiel	43 David

CHRIST

2 Joseph	4 Matthau
3 Jacob	5 Eleazer

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6 Eliud	18 Ezekias
7 Achim	19 Achaz
8 Sadoc	20 Joatham
9 Azor	21 Ozias
10 Eliakim	22 Joram
11 Abiud	23 Josaphat
12 Zarobabel	24 Asa
13 Salathiel	25 Abia
14 Jechonias	26 Roboam
15 Josias	27 Solomon
16 Amon	28 David
17 Manasses	

Now, if we are to believe this New Testament or be damned, what are we to do in this case? Consider this discrepancy in what we are taught is the inerrant Scriptures. Luke gives the number of generations from Christ to David as forty-three, while Matthew gives them twenty-seven. In these two lists there are but two names alike, David and Joseph.

Now, if these books, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were written, as the believer is taught, that they were recording this history as it transpired, and as they were in company with each other, as we are taught to believe, then why should there be in this case of giving this genealogy such a disparity as this?

This must of necessity awaken doubt, and doubt is not belief.

If it was understood and agreed upon that four of these disciples are to record these transactions as they occurred, would not people then, as now, talk these wonders over and compare records and have them prac-

tically the same? This same reasoning would apply if there were a concerted effort to fabricate and float a falsehood for any selfish purpose, and it is to be between four individuals, in the main the parts of the story should agree better than do these Gospels.

But the truth is, these Gospels were never intended or expected to be read or criticised by the outside world: they were to be the exclusive property of the priest, and read by him only; and the laity were to receive religious training from him by texts from the priests' choosing; and whether these Gospels would withstand the test of criticism was not at this time questioned or considered. But when the Reformation, through Martin Luther, gave this Bible to the world, we got it just as it was, with all of its discrepancies. Consequently, it is not reconcilable to Reason; their teachings are wholly irrational; they lack cohesion, and must fall of their own weight.

I believe, however, as I previously said, and I have good reason upon which to predicate this belief, that there was this man Jesus, and that he was a great and good man, and did and said wonderful things, at which the people greatly marveled. One reason for premising this belief is because we have marvelous Spiritual Mediums in our time, and if the people were as ignorant and superstitious now as then, and the affairs of men were dominated by the priestly hierarchy as at that time, these would be either deified or crucified, as the priest might think best for the interest of his church at large. And if crucified, he might discover vast possibilities in post-mortem deification, as in this case of Christ.

My position is that this man Christ has been terribly slandered and lied about, as I expect to prove.

Now we will postulate this assumption that Christ was a Psychic or Spiritual Medium of no common order. We will then proceed to examine these four Gospels briefly, and such of the apostles' writings as we may deem necessary to the unfoldment of what we expect to substantiate.

Were it not for the boon of what by common consent is called Modern Spiritualism, which by the decree of destiny had its advent in the year 1848; were it not for this, I do not see what could save the world at this present materialistic, scientific age from being, mayhap slowly, but surely, precipitated to bald materialism. Evolution is rapidly gaining ground, and evolution and the Scripture will not harmonize, however great the effort to make them, nor will Spiritualism and orthodoxy. So, in the general wreck of what is called the Higher Criticism of the Bible; evolution and the revelations brought to light through modern science: were it not that Spiritualism stepped into this breach at this juncture I do not see where a rational hope for post-mortem existence could find lodgment.

THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST.—Now this story of the miraculous conception places Christ on no higher plane than the hundreds of gods that have preceded him. The gods of the Greek Pantheon, of Mohammed, and the gods of Egypt all had to be miraculously ushered, and Christ is no exception.

This is too flimsy a story to spend much time upon. We have no reason to suppose but the human race at

that time were subject to passions similar and common to the human race of to-day; that the unfortunate girl is usually modest at such times and does not always answer to interrogations willingly; and when we take into consideration the inhuman law that God gave to Moses relating to cases of this kind, she, without doubt, thought as did David, she was "in a great strait, and if she could successfully settle her trouble on the Holy Ghost, how can we blame her? Joseph, it appears from the account, loved her as he should, and this flimsy story lies between them, as you may see by referring to Luke on this same subject. See Luke i. 26-31. In Matthew i. 20, the angel of the Lord tells Joseph that, That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And in Luke, Gabriel informs Mary along the same line. This is all the authority we have for this miraculous conception, which is none whatever; and is no more entitled to belief than the miracles attached to Mahomet or Horus.

From the birth of Jesus to the time he began to preach, which is said to be at the age of thirty, there is mention made of him but once, and this when he is twelve years old; so here is a hiatus of eighteen years of this Messiah that is lost to the world, unless we supply this interim from the Apocryphal New Testament, which has been rejected by the councils.

So what he is said to have said and said to have done in this brief space of from two to three years, is all we have to draw our conclusions from.

The first interesting history after this miraculous birth is Joseph and Mary's flight to Egypt with this

child Jesus, in consequence of a decree of Herod to kill all the male children throughout all Judea of a certain age, to make a certainty of putting this certain one (Jesus) out of the way. This is given to us as straight history without miracle.

Who can believe such a story as this? It must be remembered that Judea is a tributary to the Roman government, at this time under Tiberius Cæsar's reign. The Romans, as bad as they were, were never guilty of an atrocity like this. While they carried on their conquests and were very aggressive, but they were not so depraved, nor was Cæsar so brutish that he would order or tolerate such inhumanity by one of his subordinates.

Again, if this were true, here is John the Baptist, of about the same age, who would certainly have been among the children slain if this tale were true, for his parents were not warned to flee as we have ever heard of.

Again, is it reasonable that a whole province would submit to such a dastardly deed as this and take it out by just boo-hooing. This story is told only in Matthew. It is not pleasant to believe; there is no benefit to be derived from trying to believe it. Reason has good ground for rejecting it. I for one am glad to say I do not believe it.

After Christ is baptized by John the Baptist, then this Devil comes to the surface again, to test this Junior God. See Matt. iv. 1-10. Does it not beat all nature, this orthodox Devil? He seems to understand the Scripture better than the best of us; and, what seems sadly strange, he seems to hold the balance of

power; he seems to lead or carry Christ at will and places him where we would not suppose he would care to be placed. Apparently to satisfy himself as to whether he is worthy of the trust.

He also makes the Savior fast longer than I would suppose he would wish to fast; then consider the altitude of this mountain where he and Christ with his mortal sight can see all the kingdoms of the world.

It seems the Devil had some doubt in regard to salvation through Christ. And from Christ's own words I do not see why we should not have much solicitude; where he says, "Strive to enter in at the straight gate, for many shall strive and will not be able."

Just as soon as this Devil has finished his work with Jesus, it seems he commences his ministry, but he hears that John the Baptist is cast into prison. From the account we cannot look at this in any other light than that Christ is alarmed for his own safety on hearing this and concludes to put a little more space between John and himself. See Matt. iv. 12. Now what suggests itself at this time is this, we are taught that Christ's first miracle, was changing water to wine.

How much better, his first miracle to have lifted his old friend John out of prison, and thereby saved him from an untimely end. It would also have been a much better moral lesson left for posterity. We all know the blight and curse that drunkenness has caused throughout all Christendom, and does it not reflect sadly on Christianity that its founder should have wrought his first miracle for the purpose of prolonging this drunken debauch at this wedding feast at Cana of Galilee. See John ii. 1-11.

Matt. iv. 17. Is given the date at which Christ commences to preach. Now can we lay the halo of Christianity to one side for a brief space, and place Reason in its stead, and consider what strides are taken in giving us this important history. We are given to understand that the Devil has just finished his work with Jesus; he departs into Galilee upon hearing that John is in prison. (17.) He begins to preach. (18-19.) He wanders by the sea of Galilee, he sees two fishermen, he bids them follow him, which they do forthwith. (21.) On this same stroll he sees two others, Zebedee's sons, he calls them, they drop all and follow him.

Now we have an account here of how he procures four of his disciples. (Matt. ix. 9.) We are informed how he gets Matthew, to whom this first gospel is accorded. In Matt. x. 1, He has his twelve disciples. He proceeds to commission them to preach. But they are to preach to none but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (7-8.) "*And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give.*"

Now, reader, turn to John i. Read this chapter carefully and you will observe there is no relationship between these two accounts of how Christ chose his twelve disciples. See John i. 35-40, "*Again the next day after, John stood and two of his disciples (John's disciples) And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God. And the two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned and saw them following and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, where dwellest*

thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day; for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John speak was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother."

Now see Matt. iv. 18, "*And Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."*

If you follow these two accounts up in regard to how these disciples were chosen you will see that the disparity is so great, that they are both invalidated to an extent sufficient to throw them both out of court, were such evidence offered in our courts of justice to-day. Yet we are to believe or be damned! What are we to believe? When the more we investigate the more we are led to doubt.

If Christ came in this miraculous manner that the clergy would have us believe; if he wrought the miracles he is said to have wrought, and what he is said to have taught is true, there is no person that could be more interested to know it than would I. I have just as much eternity before me as any other individual on earth or in heaven, or the other place; and whether it be for weal or woe with me, none can be concerned more than am I. I do not wish to hazard my chance of the future on anything I do not consider tenable or believable or reasonable. Therefore I consider it expedient to examine the Orthodox claims of the Scripture just as critically as any other claim in which I am profoundly interested, and to accept that which is best proven. Is this unwise?

Now we will examine what Christ is said to have said and see if it is believable or pleasant to believe.

In the two or three years he is said to have preached, we have one sermon accorded to him. How came this one to be preserved? Was there a stenographer, there in the mountain, who reported it verbatim, so that we get it undefiled? Suppose it comes to us just as spoken by Jesus; let's analyze and see what we have got. See Matt. v., vi., vii., to verse seventeen, we get nothing that can possibly be assimilated as food for a hungry soul. Verse 5, "*Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.*" Now this is as rational to me as any of these beatific declarations, and as his words are not to pass away, what are we to understand by this? Are we to understand that those who are aspiring to own the earth and have the lion's share already, that it is owing to their excessive meekness? Are the multi-millionaires of our country who are laying and have laid their plans to corner all the necessities of life and make us pay them tribute for the right to live; Is it because they are so meek? I must leave this to your consideration.

See verse 17 of this sermon, "*Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfill.*" (18.) "*For verily I say unto you. Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass till all be fulfilled.*"

"*Whosoever therefore shall break one of these last commandments and shall teach men to do so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*"

Here Jesus endorses the law and the prophets in fact the whole Old Testament, *tout ensemble*, and enjoins upon us both faith and practice in every particular from the least to the greatest of these commandments in this law of Moses, that it may be well with us when we arrive at the gates of the kingdom.

Now turn to verse 38 in this same sermon, before the echoes of this quotation have fairly died, he proceeds to quote this same law for the purpose of condemning it. "*Ye have heard it said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.*"

Now this is from the Law of Moses, given him by the Father, if any was so given, in the Old Scripture. Here see what he says, (39.) "*But I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also.*"

Then follows the injunction to love your enemies, he here teaches many things, which later he contradicts in the most glaring manner. He tells us we are lost by not believing. That the wicked are to be burned with unquenchable fire. "*Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand. Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels.*"

The things he enjoins, "to turn the left cheek when we have received a full blow on the right" and to love our enemies when they have done their utmost to do us injury and have succeeded, is demanding of us that which by nature we do not nor cannot inherit, in short, he demands that which is incompatible to human nature. While we might not seek vengeance, but to love our enemies, is to exact from us more than we are taught

we are to expect to receive from the Father, or Christ himself.

(vi. 25-29.) In this same sermon he enjoins upon his hearers to take no thought of the future, no thought for food, clothing or shelter: because the Gentiles seek after these things.

Where are we Gentiles at? Is Christ what the Christian claims, and yet would instruct his beloved in things that would lead to their annihilation? We are led to think he recommends this measure in order to go counter to the Gentiles, from what he says. The reader will observe that Jesus has no love or consideration for the Gentile throughout this book of Matthew.

But the Omnipotent has endowed us with the faculty of self-preservation, and we know we all have to have a care of the future and our bodily needs and when a God or a son of a God tells us to throw this all up we have good ground for doubting his claim. You can see this lesson disavowed throughout all Christendom, and yet we must believe. (vii. 13-14.) In this sermon is this inflexible decree, about the two gates, the broad gate that leads to destruction, and the straight gate and narrow way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

The people that heard this sermon, 'tis said, were astonished at his doctrine, and so am I. That this Savior who understood from the foundation of the world that at this time he was to become incarnate and reveal to mankind the mysteries of Godliness, and the only sermon that is preserved to consist of what this does, is enough to make one feel weary. It is but drivel and contradiction throughout. The best thing about

this sermon is Christ never preached it. It is nothing but priestly fabrication, and a priest of but little sagacity or common sense at that.

CHAPTER XXVI

Dear friends the two most slandered personages that have ever occupied the mind of man, has been this imaginary Father and his imaginary Son. The fabulous things that have been accorded to them, to hold them up in a most ridiculous light to the world, is certainly enough to make impartial justice put in a protestation. As I have said before, I have a cogent reason for believing that this man Jesus Christ, lived here on earth, and labored to reform his people, and to teach a better humanity, but he was in advance of the age in which he lived and was crucified. He was brought into life according to the law that governs in all cases of reproduction, and the miracles, as recorded in regard to his resurrection, and ascension, when reason and truth are brought to bear upon them dissolve to nothingness.

Now we will note a few of the unreasonable things he is made to say, that we may see if there is joy and comfort in trying to believe them. The angels that heralded Jesus on that memorable night said, "Peace on earth; good will toward men."

We have spoken where Christ admonishes us to love each other, the golden rule, etc. Now let us note some counter passages of scripture ascribed to him. See Matt. x. 35, "*For I am come to set a man at variance*

against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

Also Luke xii. 51-53, "*Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth. I tell you, nay; but rather division. For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.*"

Also Luke xiv. 25-26, "*And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and his mother, and wife, and children, and brother and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*"

Again Matt. x. 33, "*But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.*"

While Christ has enjoined upon us, to lavish our love upon our enemies, and those who would do us bodily harm, and would rob us of our coat and cloak.

He then proceeds to instruct us that if we would be in tune with him and the Father, we must hate our friends and kindred, and all bound to us by the ties of consanguinity or affinity.

I might adduce still much more along this line, but this is enough. Is there consolation and enjoyment in believing Christ the only begotten son of God and

that he has left his covenant to mankind as long as time shall endure.

“Whose words are not to pass away,” and this is what it consists of: to obliterate every tie of affection, and love, from those who by nature have a right to claim it? To follow Christ in the above quotations, would be to sink ourselves below the level of the brute!

The only thing we can do in this life—environed as we are—is as far as we are able, to remember our obligations to our parents; those bound to us by the marital obligation and those to whom we are responsible for bringing into the world: then our friends and neighbors as far as we can: to the stranger give assistance when you find ’tis needed, and you can lend a helping hand: or even a friendly look or word; and sometimes what is great help is not to willfully hinder by calumny or aspersion. But to follow such instruction as this accorded to Christ, would be to degrade ourselves below the most benighted nations of the globe! What kind of a heaven would we find, were we to reach it by stamping from our natures everything that stands for humanity or decency?

Reader you do not think the above passages pleasant to believe do you? I certainly do not, and thanks be to the Infinite, Christ never has uttered such blasphemy as this! I am going to stand up for Jesus. Suppose the name of Washington or Lincoln or any of our nation’s benefactors should after they had passed on, have their history besmirched by such outlandish stuff as is ascribed to Christ? How soon you would denounce the calumniator as a liar and a villain.

How then came such passages in the New Testament?

Do you ask? I went over this ground a long way back; how our Bible was first compiled, in the reign of Constantine the Great.

How plain it is, that this Nicene council composed of monks and priests, with Constantine as president. Constantine had his plans arranged to establish the Christian religion by law. This meant that there would have to be a great sacrifice of innocent life and blood. And that this measure could be greatly facilitated, if passages of this type were inserted in the canon; and as this canon was theirs exclusively, they being sole custodian, could therefore doctor or interpolate at will. The rest, I should think, would be an easy guess.

This Scripture could then be inculcated or forced upon the Pagan, and by offering inducements to informers, and impressing continually upon their not highly developed minds morally, that the will of Christ was above all earthly things to be considered. And that it was right for one member of a family to inform against others, if such persisted in their Pagan worship: they could then proceed to open their Holy book and do as Robert Burns once said, "Nail their murder freighted lie with Scripture."

These black handed passages are powerless now to work such evil; but in the time of the Roman and Spanish inquisitions I do not suppose we can form any adequate conception of their awfulness!

The next thing that comes uppermost in my mind is the account of the Transfiguration of Christ. This it would seem is among the important things contained in the Scripture. For here is an account of ocular demonstration of two persons who have been a long

time dead of reappearing and if these two actually appeared as stated, it certainly means a great deal to mankind here in his dark estate, if his Bible is his only light, because if these were alive then and returned, the rational conclusion is that they are still alive, and if they why not the generations all that have preceded Christ, and us as well, be still alive somewhere?

I have heard this referred to many times from the pulpit as a great and wonderful revelation. Spiritualists also have used this text with which to battle their Orthodox friends.

This account is recorded in Matt. xvii, in Mark ix, and in Luke ix.

This story is familiar with you all: the difference in the accounts would not be sufficient to invalidate the claim: Luke says it was about eight days, while the other two say it was six days.

Now here is what Christ promises preceding this transfiguration. See Mark ix. 1: "*And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.*"

We must admit that there was no great showing, when the kingdom came, but nevertheless were it true and this was the only manifestation of the kind recorded on the pages of the past, we would treasure it up and anchor our hopes thereto, That if Moses and Elias survive the change called death, then why not we? Verse 2, same chapter, says, "*And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, James and John, and leadeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves:*

and he was transfigured before them." (4) "*And there appeared unto them Elias (meaning Elijah I suppose) with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus."*

There is nothing about this account unpleasant to believe, I would be willing and even glad to believe it; it would be a good object lesson which I could use later. But though we would be glad to believe this story, it is without foundation and must be relegated to the realm of fiction, because it lacks rational proof. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, tells us this story of Peter, James and John. These last named have all written matter for this New Testament, or matter accorded to them, and there is not one word or hint that can be construed to touch upon this case by them. John in his gospel is tediously minute in unimportant details, while this most important story is not in the least referred to: while he can speak of the crowing of a cock, this account of this transfiguration in which he (John) was one of the highly honored guests, emprivileged to see the "Kingdom of Heaven" for the purpose of giving this fact to the world, we would infer; yet is not in the least alluded to by him, neither is it by Peter or James. Though ever so much we might wish to believe this account we cannot accept it for want of proof.

Now we will compare these gospel accounts of the crucifixion and what immediately followed, and see how much of it is entitled to belief.

John does not speak of an earthquake, nor one word about the sun being darkened, or nothing about the vail of the temple being rent, nor of the graves being opened, nor of the bodies of the saints which slept, arising and appearing to many.

This also would be valuable history, and would be very impressive, and if this did happen it would have given this occasion world-wide publicity: and would not be confined to this account of Matthew alone as it is.

The earthquake, the rending of the rocks, the opening of the saints' graves, and their appearing to many, should certainly have been spoken of by more than Matthew, and told in a very slovenly manner by him. It is not told as if expected to be believed.

Here are two quotations relating to this subject:

"Notice the story of the dead getting up out of their graves and going into the 'holy city' and appearing to many." Does not this sound apocryphal? Where was the holy city? It certainly was not Jerusalem, the city over which Jesus wept, and that he compared to the fabled Sodom and Gomorrah, and in which he was killed. To who did these "saints" appear? The use of one name here would have been a good thing. The fact is these stories were invented long, long, after their supposed author had gone to join his fathers in the other country. (Hull.)

Quotation two, "How shall we excuse the supine inattention of the Pagan and philosophic world to the evidences which were here presented by the hand of Omnipotence, not to their reason, but to their senses. This miraculous event, which ought to have excited the wonder, the curiosity and the devotion of mankind, passed without notice, in an age of science and history. It happened during the lifetime of Seneca, and Pliny the elder, who must have experienced the immediate effects or received the earliest intelligence of this prod-

igy. Each of these philosophers in a laborious work, have recorded all the great phenomena of nature—earthquakes, meteors, comets, and eclipses, which indefatigable curiosity could collect: both the one and the other have omitted to mention the greatest phenomena to which mortal eye has been witness since the creation of the globe.” (Gibbon.)

This miraculous phenomena following the crucifixion must also be lopped off for want of proof.

My plan at the outset was to be as brief as possible with my examination of the Scripture, and this is still my aim, but I have now reached the point in amount when I expected this part of my work would be in, and yet I am not through, but I trust I will not weary you a great while longer. The general belief that these gospels were written by the ones whose names they bear, is a mistake, as research has conclusively proven.

These four books all start with, “The gospel according to St. Matthew, etc.; then look at the title page of your New Testament, and you will read translated out of the original Greek. Then consult your geography and see that Greece lies on the opposite side of an arm of the Mediterranean, consider the facilities for navigation and communication at that time, and that Christ did not speak Greek, nor any of his disciples, and you will begin to conclude that our sacred New Testament Scripture is pretty far-fetched.

Then consider the proneness of many people to wish to become conspicuous by being eye witnesses to some wonderful thing that has happened somewhere, sometime. As such we all have seen, and are ever willing and

anxious to add to the original and supply new if necessary. When you look at this Scripture in this light you have made a good stride in the search of truth.

Now I will make a brief quotation from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*:

“No New Testament Canon, except a partial and unauthoritative one existed until the latter half of the second century; that is till the idea of a Catholic church began to be entertained. The Ebionites or the Jewish Christians had their favorite gospels and acts. The Gospel of Matthew was highly prized by them, existing as it did in various recensions. Other documents, such as the Revelation of John, and the preaching of Peter.

(Jewish—Christian history subsequently rewritten and employed in Clementine’s *Recognitions* and *Homilies*) were also in esteem. Even so late as 170-175 Hegesippus, a Jewish Christian used the gospel according to the Hebrews, and despised Paul’s writings, in conformity to the leading principle of the party to which he belonged, viz, the identity of Jesus’ words with the Old Testament.

It is the opinion of scholars that really no authoritative Canon was made until about the middle of the fourth century, when Constantine appointed Eusebius to give the world a Canon, which he did.

This is corroborative of what I have before said, That the “Mother Church or Catholic,” was custodian of this “Holy Keep” for many centuries. They alone are responsible for all the recensions and redactions that it has underwent for this long period of time, and the internal evidence as to its truth or falsehood, or

its rationality is all we have to guide us in our conclusion.

We can do no better than to select texts promiscuously from these gospels, and judge for ourselves, whether they are of divine or human origin.

We will aim at this time to make selections from what Christ is said to have said. I have spoken of where Christ admonishes his hearers "*to take no thought of the morrow.*" (Matt. vi. 25-34.) Now please turn to Luke xvi. 1-12. Please read this selection, I will quote 9-11, "*And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful, also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?*"

You will observe here is one admonition in direct contradistinction to the other. Now it is evident they cannot both be divine although they are both ascribed to Christ. The question then resolves itself into this. If Christ gave to his followers both of these lessons, there is certainly a mistake in the claim that he is Divine, any more than the rest of us, and if he has not given them who has, and if he gave the one and not the other, which one did he give? This is certain that if he gave the first he taught his followers, imbecile, improvidence, and if the latter, he taught downright

dishonesty; irrational in either case, and where is the way out for the theologian. I must own I am not as anxious about the theologian as I am for the rest of us. I suppose this is because there are so many more of us.

Here is a rational verdict in regard to these two scriptural lessons.

They have both been concocted by the wily Catholic Priesthood. The first lesson is intended for the laity, to impress upon their minds the danger of riches, and the obstruction that this world's goods will be to spiritual growth, and a proper preparation for eternal life.

The second lesson is intended specifically for the Holy Papal See. That they by predilection and holiness are exalted above the transitory things of this world; therefore they can hold this "filthy lucre" in fee for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, keeping a little for themselves, since "the workman is worthy of his meat."

The next text I would speak from is in Luke xviii. 18-30. The rich ruler who asked Jesus, "*what he should do to inherit eternal life?*"

Jesus first rebukes him for calling him good, and informs him that there is none good but God. How bewildering is this since we are taught that Christ and God are coequal and coeternal, yet Christ declares he is not good. But he tells this ruler to keep the commandments; he then proceeds to call over certain ones that he is specially to observe: to which the ruler replies "he has kept these from his youth up." Then Jesus tells him he yet lacks one thing: the thing implied is poverty, for Jesus tells him to sell all that he has and

distribute it to the poor, and he will then have treasure in heaven.

Does this impress one as being of supra divine origin? Is this a rational doctrine? That extreme poverty is a passport to eternal bliss, and wealth a sure passport to hell! This is very illogical; so much so that nobody believes it. The clergy takes no stock in this lesson of Christ's. The plan upon which the whole theological machinery is conducted testifies to their unfaith in what is here said.

We are left to infer that if this rich young man, had replied that he had been lax in regard to these commandments, that by making corrections here he could have inherited eternal life and retain his wealth: but as it was he went away sorrowing.

Jesus then proceeds to amplify upon what he has said, and says, "*How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven. For it is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.*"

This knot of scripture has been such a stunner to the devoted corporation magnate, and the millionaire, and as such are useful factors in the church in these later days, that the clergy, has had to do some hard thinking in order to get a satisfactory adjustment to this difficult problem.

So they have constructed a gate in the wall of Jerusalem, with the keystone to this mural arch so low that the camel has to be relieved of his load, and then get on his knees and kick himself through, though with considerable difficulty. I have seen this illustrated in the catechism with the camel on his knees and the driver

holding on to the stem of the halter trying to persuade the poor camel to pass through: typifying the way that the rich man can get in to the kingdom. This certain gate they have named the "needle's eye."

The builders of this Scripture meant nothing of the kind; whoever wrote it, here, meant what he said.

In Matthew where this story is given it says the "eye of a needle," and in Mark it also says, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

No, Mr. Rich Man, according to this Scripture you are barred, despite the strenuous efforts of the clergy to provide a place for you to crawl through, you are excluded. Now let us follow this history a step farther. Those that heard this decree, are seized with consternation, and are forced to ask, "who then can be saved?" Then Jesus to quiet their alarms, tells them, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. How are we to understand this?"

CHAPTER XXVII

Theology tells us that Christ and the Father are coequal and coeternal. In this first case his comparison of the camel and needle makes it utterly impossible for a rich man to get to this coveted place, heaven. Then he says it is possible with God, which reduces Christ to a common worldling, and makes the lesson up to this point meaningless or nil. We will now follow a step farther. Peter now raises the question as to what there was going to be in it for those who have thrown up

business and have followed him, when he says, "Lo we have left all and followed thee." See same Luke xviii. 29, "*And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.*"

Now let us pass this whole lesson under review:

1. Christ makes the conditions impossible for a rich man to enter heaven.
2. It is easy and possible when God gets on to the job.
3. Those who have forsaken all and followed Christ are promised to be made rich in this world's goods and an abundant entrance at "St. Peter's gate."

This lesson resolves itself into a "reductio ad absurdum," as you will discover most of them do when put into the crucible of Reason.

Christ teaches; or these synoptics—as the three first gospels are called—teaches in a vague way in regard to a post mortem existence. John teaches the same. And this I firmly believe. But even this is so tortured and twisted as to make it look of little value, or what would be nearer the truth worse than valueless because the great majority are represented as going wrong, and this means according to their code endless suffering which would be worse than eternal unconscious sleep.

A great error in regard to this Bible is to premise that the churches were founded upon it. The fact is just the reverse; the Bible has been founded upon, and by the churches. The Jewish church the Old Testa-

ment, and the Catholic or Christian Church the New.

Now let us examine the miracles accorded to Christ; and Christ's ability to confer this miracle working forever to his disciples.

It has been in fashion from man's earliest history to have gods with them more or less; the Greeks at one time were said to have had some three hundred gods and demigods, and all of these gods in order to hold their job, had to work miracles, which they are all recorded to have done.

What is a miracle? Here is what Webster says, "A wonder or a wonderful thing: but in theology an event or effect contrary to the established constitution of things: or a deviation from the known laws of nature; a supernatural event." Miracles can be wrought only by Almighty power; as when Christ healed lepers saying, "*I will, be thou clean.*"

As the world has advanced in knowledge, the miraculous has gradually disappeared. Telepathy, psychometry, clairvoyance, clairaudience, healing, in fact all that belongs to the realm of spirit manifestation drops from the realm of miracle, and takes its place within the province of natural law. Among these also is levitation, and externalization, and materialization the moving of ponderable bodies such as chairs, tables, etc. There is much more that I might name that was once classed as miracle, but are now understood differently.

There is too in the realm of the occult what is called hypnotism, which is a proven fact, and it is a marvel how one well up in this gift will control his subject and astonish his spectators.

While I cannot name here all of the phases of Spirit-

ual manifestation they are understood by those who have made research into this subject, and to deny this makes one look downright ignorant and with such I would not wish to waste my time.

But here is another phase I will name, because here is proof that it was known of, and employed at the time of the building of these gospels. Viz, Automatic writing. See Luke i. 59-63, relating to the christening of John the Baptist, "*And it came to pass, on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marveled all.*"

Now to one who has explored into the realm of the occult, it is clearly apparent, that an excarnate intelligence for some reason concluded to have this child named John. Although you will observe that John is not a Hebrew name, nor is it found in all the Old Scripture. This "intelligence" impressed Elizabeth, and these Jewish mutilators objected; and when the father was appealed to he calls for his writing table and this intelligence controls his hand, and writes, "His name is John." And then all of the bystanders "marveled:" which makes this phase of Spirit manifestation clear to the unprejudiced, Truth seeker.

Now I will premise that all of the "miraculous" ascribed to Christ when priestly exaggeration is elimi-

nated will all take their place harmoniously within the pale of "Psychic Phenomena" which is indeed marvelous, but not what is termed "miracle."

The history of Jesus Christ, his miracles; the miraculous conception; and the whole story of his nativity, from beginning to end are contradictory and unreasonable. His predictions of the end of the world places him on a level with Miller, and Old Mother Shipton, and all who have been so short sighted as not to have a slide in their predictions.

This shows that Christ was but a man, and fallible as are the rest of mankind. His teachings as given are fallacious and the creeds upon which they are founded are also fallacious, and are a blight to civilization.

Think ye dear reader, that there would be less of love in the world, less benevolence, less of charity, less benevolent institutions, and all that stands for the up-building of humanity, if these weird, unreasonable Priestly falsehoods were discarded, and our religion reset with the immortal gems of truth and reason? I tell you, No.

But let us not digress too far from our subject. Christ's miracles and his ability to transfer this power to others. See Luke x. 1, Here Christ commissioned seventy to go into the cities to preach and heal the sick. (17-18) *"And the seventy returned again with joy, saying Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."*

Reader does this sound as if it came from a supra mundane source? He (Christ) "saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven." The question is who were these

devils that were so common at that time, and seem like the prehistoric animals to have become extinct? Christ's miracles consisted to considerable extent in casting out these devils. And at one time he seemed rather unchristian in his behavior, in turning some of them loose, for he permitted them to enter into a large herd of swine causing their destruction by running down the steep hill into the sea, and they all were drowned! This does not look like all around first-class Christianity, because these swine were valuable to the Gentiles, and they were made to suffer all of this loss, and then these devils were all set free again, for they would never remain in dead hogs, from the description we have of them.

The arch Devil of to-day is the devil of ignorance; and the most successful way of casting him out is to supplant him with the weapons of Knowledge, Reason and Truth.

These seventy disciples are nowhere else spoken of; they disappear and are never heard from again.

But now let us give a brief consideration to where Christ commissions his chosen twelve of whom we hear so much.

See Matt. x. 8. Here he calls unto him his twelve disciples, and gives them their charge. Verse 5, he says, "*Go not into the way of the Gentiles and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; (6) But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*" Here is what he tells them to do. (8) "*Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils.*" This is easy, I could say the same to anybody, but would they do it? Did Christ's disciples ever raise the dead? There

is no doubt but they would come as near to doing this miracle as would Christ himself.

'Tis repugnant to our natures to wish the dead to return to their mortal bodies after the sickness and suffering is ended, and we know that they are dead and dissolution has commenced its work; which work is commenced as soon as the spirit leaves the body. Why should Christ wish to prove his power by such an unseemly demonstration as this? Why would he not have said, "A transition from the earth to the supernal world and taught his hearers the meaning of death, instead of the gloomy unmeaning mess that has been ascribed to him.

I have spoken before of this subject "raising the dead" but will reiterate. There has never been a dead body restored to life. That there have been cases of suspended animation, and that such have been buried alive has been proven, and that others have narrowly escaped the same fate has been frequently recorded.

This is a terrible thing, and a body should never be interred until there is certainty that life has departed.

That Christ may have been instrumental at that ignorant age of saving some one or more from this fate is not impossible; and this would be sufficient for a score of miracles.

Christ does not say anywhere that he had power above his disciples nor that the things he did they could not do. He says just the contrary. See John xiv. 12. He says, "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do; because I*

go to the father." Here is a revelation of truly great value. Here Jesus says what thousands can testify to to-day; that he had no power, but others might attain to, by believing in the things he did, and by observing the law by which they were done. His going to the Father has no meaning more than that he expected to pass on as do we all, and that they could carry the good work on which had been commenced by him.

As the world advances in knowledge the God question is farther removed. At that time Israel's God was still wreaking vengeance on the Gentiles with savage satisfaction, and is still braided into our present day theology.

But we trust he will in time become liberated, or that erring mankind will become liberated from him.

Here is another hard knot for the theologian. The answering of prayer. If Jesus had have kept his promise in this matter alone, there would have been nothing farther needed to have converted the world; and those that would not convert, could have been removed by prayer. In proof of this, see Matt. xxi. 21-22, "*Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily, I say unto you. If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain. Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.*" See also Mark xi. 24, "*Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive them, and ye shall have them.*" Also John xiv. 13-14, "*And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be*

glorified in the son. If ye ask any thing in my name I will do it." John makes no reference to the fig tree that Jesus cursed.

There is much more concordant scripture, but I think this sufficient. There is nothing contained in the whole Scripture, where a declaration by the Father or Son proves its untruth as frequently and in as flagrant a manner as does these promises accorded to Christ in regard to prayer.

Were we to get all that we desired through prayer, we would soon be reduced to a state of dependent nonentities. We could afford to degenerate to the state of babbling childhood; the only thing we would need to know would be, how to pray. How inconsistent to reason is this teaching, and how apparent the fallacy! Who have not seen, time without number, those who seemed to have implicit faith in their Bible eke out an existence in abject poverty, perhaps in the almshouse?

Who have not also seen the believer with a mortal disease, robbing him of every enjoyment and every hope in this life, while he or she is still young, and the attachments to this life are strong and to all appearance they have much to live for? Would not such have something to pray for, upon which to attach all of the faith or hope that a human being could command?

And yet their prayers and the prayers of their friends are of no avail. Death claims his victim.

How Christ can be believed Divine with such an array of evidence to the contrary baffles reason.

It is strange how the above scripture should have found its way into these Gospels; it is so easily proved fallacious, and so absurd in its every detail, that I

cannot see who should have wanted it placed there, but it has been, and proves how little good sense and judgment these Gospel builders had.

The rejoinder to this by the Theologian, is, but the Bible still stands despite all the assaults of its adversaries. Mr. Theologian, I am willing it should stand. I would not wish it blotted out, nor do I call myself an enemy or an adversary; but I am happy to say we are not obliged to believe it, as taught by Theology, which is the best thing there is about it.

The reader may infer from what has been said, that I have no faith or belief in prayer; this is a mistake; I believe in consistent prayer. Prayer that you may keep yourself in tune with the Infinite; prayer that you may be led in the paths of truth and knowledge, and right living; prayer that our labor may be blessed if it is honest labor and meant for good; and for whatever we pray we should work with our hands for that end, and if our prayers and labor fail, we can only say, Infinite Intelligence knows best.

Now I wish to speak of a prediction ascribed to Christ. If Christ is what is claimed, the only begotten Son of God, and came to this earth for a special purpose, and proves his Divinity by miracles and wonders, when he makes a prediction, the prediction should have been fulfilled, in order to give his followers a faith that would withstand all of the assaults that may be made against it, of whatever nature the assault might be.

It is Christ's coming to judgment, or what is called, "Christ's second coming" that I now wish to speak of.

In my younger years, when I was trying to believe this Scripture literally, this was among the most perplexing problems that appealed to my mind, and one that strained my faith beyond the point of sticking.

This awful time predicted is recorded in the three synoptics or Matthew, Mark, and Luke. John does not seem to think this worth speaking of. Matthew records this in xxiv. It is portrayed as terrible to contemplate, and Christ exhorts all interested to pray that their flight may not be in the winter nor on the Sabbath day. I used to wonder what the Sabbath day could have to do with it; and if He (Christ) and God did not wish them to race so unduly on the Sabbath day; why would not they who are responsible for this high time, start it on Monday and try and have the business closed by Saturday night. Is it Moses' law Christ had in mind, and that they would all have to be taken outside of the camp and stoned to death for profaning the Sabbath? This time predicted is horrible in its details. See Matt. xiv. 24: *"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."* Again it says if those days should not be shortened there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. To give us an idea of the awfulness of these last days immediately after this tribulation, the sun is to be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars are to fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens are to be shaken. And God is to send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect

from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Then Christ says, "*Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.*"

How wide of the mark is this prediction? It was all to be fulfilled before that generation passed, and there have more than fifty passed and we are still waiting.

And how exceedingly human this all sounds. What idea think you Christ had of the stars when he was going to have them fall from heaven? Where were they to fall to? is another query.

Again Christ says, at the time of the coming of this "terrible day of the Lord there are false Christs to appear, and these shall show great signs and wonders, to the extent that the "elect" are scarcely to know the difference, so the question may well be asked, Where are the ungodly and the sinner to appear?

All that this Christ proves himself by is signs and wonders, and if other Christs come with the same credentials, I should say the plan is to deceive us; and if God himself is laboring to this end, as we are here led to understand, how can we well avoid being deceived? But as I have before said this is another priestly scare, designed to extort from the poor ignorant God fearing supplicant a little more money.

Another thing Christ teaches if he teaches anything, is the resurrection of the body.

See John v. 28, 29, which says, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of

life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Again, Luke xiv. 14. Here Christ speaks of this resurrection as though it were a sure thing. Here he is instructing his disciples how to conduct a feast and who should be invited. He says, "*And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*"

I now wish to call your attention to another lesson of Christ's on the resurrection. See (Matt. xxii. 23-32). The Sadducees are defined as what we now call Materialists, and they were desirous of propounding some queries on this resurrection question. Where, when seven brothers had married the same woman and in turn had died and at last she died. They wished to know whose wife she would be after the resurrection. Christ's reply is what we are after. Here it is "*Jesus answered and said, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.*" Tis stated, that when the multitude heard this they were astonished at his doctrine. Well might they be. This reply of Jesus' is so vague and obscure that it is not understandable. Whether we are to understand from the text that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are alive somewhere at this time, and God was *their* God; or whether God was God to this trio during their

natural lives, and was their God no more because they were dead, but after the resurrection they would then be alive and he would then be their God again. The language does not admit of explanation. I have spoken somewhat upon this subject of the resurrection of the body. It is a waning faith, and as reason develops, it will dwindle to a rudiment, like the vermiform appendix, but I hope will not be the source of trouble, as has been this little entrail.

Reason denounces the resurrection as intolerable to intelligence. It is the most irrational, unnatural thing that Ignorance and Superstition could devise as a religion, is this unnatural doctrine of the resurrection of the mortal body. So we will let this subject rest.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The old subject of faith is one that was a query to my mind from early childhood. When a boy I used to muse upon what a powerful commodity was the thing called faith. I had a good idea what a mustard seed was like, and to think that a faith the size of this little seed could remove mountains, by saying the word, made faith look to me most valuable; because the land of my nativity was and still is thickly set with mountains, which I would gladly have seen replaced with good bottom land.

In Matthew, Mark and Luke, Christ speaks of this thing, "faith" to his disciples, rather reproachfully, as if they should have a well developed faith, from what they have already seen.

In the case of Matt. xvii. 20, the several verses preceding, shows that there was a case of an obstinate

devil, which the disciples were unable to lay, with all the faith and knowledge they had in devil dealing; so the case had to be carried to Christ. He after denouncing his disciples in pretty strong terms for their lack of faith, rebukes this devil, and the devil makes his exodus, where God only knows.

His disciples want an explanation why they could not make the disconnection (20), "*And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.*"

Then right in close connection, the next verse (21), he says: "*Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.* After pronouncing this panegyric upon faith, he then immediately declares prayer and fasting the more potent. In Matt. xxi. 21, Christ again reiterates the power of faith, when his disciples marveled, at the time that he cursed the fig-tree, how soon the fig-tree withered away.

He verifies this same thing in regard to removing mountains again in Mark xi. 23. Again in Luke xvii. 6. He impresses them again, but this time instead of a mountain it is a sycamore tree.

But we are given to understand that this minute quantity of faith is equal to the task, whether a mountain is to be removed or a sycamore tree. Here are his words: "*And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamore tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.*"

These are all declarations. It would seem as though

Christ should have given an ocular demonstration or two, since it was so very easy and required so very little quantity of faith.

If he had have removed a mountain or two through faith alone, or sent a few sycamore trees floating through the air on a still day by the power of faith, this would have been a much more impressive lesson for the unbeliever. But what throws the gloom of doubt over the whole thing is that Christ's power through faith does not seem stable; for among his own kin and in his own country, see Mark vi. 5, which says: "*And he could there do no mighty work save that he laid hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.*"

In the book of John this subject of faith is not brought to the foreground. Why should John not have spoken of a matter of so great importance? The book of John is a much later production, and the Papal Church was pretty well defined, and her creed fairly formulated; and she needed this Gospel to bolster it up, and the faith part was not so much needed. The Gospel of John is intended more particularly for church extension; that is, to extend the redeeming blood of Christ to the Gentiles, thereby making it universal to the world.

Christ is very partial to the Jews in the Synoptics, while in John he is constantly upbraiding them for their unbelief. This faith question, as recorded, with all of its connections, and Christ's inability to make use of this power when in his own country, when weighed in the balances of Reason, drops to the level of myth and fable.

Among all the creeds called Christian there is not a

devotee among them that can move by faith alone a mote floating in a sunbeam.

I will now invite your attention to a portion of John vi. You should read this chapter, because it is unique; it teaches a doctrine so abhorrent in its nature that 'tis stated (see verse 6), "*From that time many of his disciples went back and walked with him no more.*"

Were they justified in doing so? Let us make a quotation or two and see. Verses 51-56: "*I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove amongst themselves, saying, How shall this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*"

"*Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.*"

"*For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him.*"

What are we to make of this? What could be more disgusting or offensive to human nature than this language accorded to Christ? What could be said more revolting? Just pure cannibalism!

Think you Jesus ever said this? If he had been so solicitous of having his flesh eaten and his blood drank, why would not this thing have been so stated in the preceding Gospels, which are mute upon this matter?

While in John, Christ makes eating his flesh and drinking his blood imperative to salvation.

While he says repeatedly in the preceding Gospels that belief and baptism are what saves.

What more irrational and repulsive could be offered to what are called the heathen, and what would they have as religion more diabolical, which this would replace? To try to convert the cannibal with such teaching as this would seem akin to trying to fight the orthodox Devil with fire.

This is so repugnant that 'tis said (verse 66), *"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."*

I should say it would be extremely hazardous to use the above Scriptural quotations to convert the cannibal of the Dark Continent, especially if the missionary were in fair flesh.

What reason can be given for placing stuff like this in this Scripture is truly an enigma.

Founded upon this barbarous record is what is called the "Sacrament," administered by the clergy of to-day, where a crumb of bread simulates Christ's body and a sip of fruit juice his blood.

There is one thing to me very consoling about this above quotation, and the same applies to the whole of the old, old orthodox story. Christ never taught any such outlandish thing as this, but somebody has wrote this and it has been placed here in this Scripture. I do not see who would wish to father such stuff as this; of all the contemptible things done in the name of religion is to saddle such slander as this upon the innocent dead! But priestcraft has done this thing, and

would make their falsehoods binding upon the human race as long as time endures, were it not that Truth and Reason are to take their proper place in the hearts and minds of men in God's good time, and priestly error is to become a thing of the past.

This same John gave us this most wonderful revelation from the Isle of Patmos, called the Apocalypse.

Suppose one should write such an effusion at this time; what would be thought of it? The author would be accounted insane. What other conclusion could be arrived at?—unless it were done for a joke. Whether a man by the name of John, or whoever it was that wrote this matter in the canon ascribed to him, it is evident to my mind that his productions are the result of a diseased imagination.

Note what he says at the conclusion of his first effort—his Gospel—John xxi. 25:

“And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the whole if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.”

How can one believe an unreasonable, contradictory story, and then have the narrator conclude by proving himself a man of such limited, childlike judgment? Just think of it: “If all the things that Christ did were recorded, the world could not contain the books.”

The things that are recorded that he both did and said, his sermon on the Mount and all, would not require more than from twenty minutes to half an hour to relate; so just think of what the world has lost if this be true!

In John xvi. 12, 'tis recorded that Christ says, “I

have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." What could these things have been? Were they things still more unreasonable than the things we now have accorded to him? Brethren, I think we have a-plenty now, such as it is.

We now come to the closing scene—Christ's crucifixion.

This is recorded in all of these Gospels. That Christ was crucified—this we have no reason to doubt.

There have been many martyrs, recorded on the pages of history, to their belief or unbelief, and that this man Christ was one, this much we can believe. But the miraculous attached to this martyr, his resurrection and his ascension, the stories are so divergent and the whole thing so unreasonable; and the whole plan of salvation founded upon the Old Scriptures and these pretended teachings is so devoid of rationality, that we can but doubt at best, and doubt, according to the plan, excludes us from Abraham's bosom, which is the much sought for spot, according to Luke (xvi. 19-31).

Upon this subject of the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, I will quote from Thomas Paine.

There has a period of one hundred and fourteen years elapsed since he wrote his "Age of Reason," and this period has wrought many changes in the departments of human thought and human activities; and while his "Age of Reason" proves him a man of great ability, and that he had a courage equal to his convictions, but I would not pretend to say that what he writes is in all cases infallible. He wrote as he understood, but time brings revelations; and while in

the main I think this volume of his correct, there are some things in it, and also in this quotation, that he did not understand, nor does it seem understood by the orthodox churches of to-day. After making this quotation I will note a few exceptions.

Page 142: "The first question, however, upon the books of the New Testament, as upon those of the Old, is, Are they genuine? Were they written by the persons to whom they are ascribed? For it is upon this ground only that the strange things related therein have been credited. Upon this point there is no *direct proof for or against*; and all that this state of a case proves is doubtfulness: and doubtfulness is the apposite of belief. The state, therefore, that the books are in proves against themselves as far as this kind of proof can go.

"But exclusive of this presumption is that the books called the Evangelists, and ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were not written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; and that they are impositions. The disordered state of the history in these four books, the silence of one book upon matters related in the others, and the disagreement that is to be found among them, implies that they are the production of some unconnected individuals, many years after the things they pretend to relate, each of whom made his own legend; and not the writings of men living intimately together, as the men called apostles are supposed to have done; in fine, that they have been manufactured, as the books of the Old Testament have been, by other persons than those whose names they bear.

"The story of the angel announcing what the church

calls the *immaculate conception* is not so much as mentioned in the books ascribed to Mark and John; and is differently related in Matthew and Luke.

“The former says the angel appeared to Joseph; and the latter says it was to Mary; but either Joseph or Mary was the worst evidence that could have been thought of; for it was others that should have testified *for them* and not they for themselves. Were any girl that is now with child to say, and even to swear it, that she was gotten with child by a ghost, and that an angel told her so, would she be believed? Certainly she would not. Why then are we to believe the same thing of another girl whom we never saw, told by nobody knows who, nor when, nor where? How strange and inconsistent is it that the same circumstance that would weaken the belief even of a probable story, should be given as a motive for believing this one, that has upon the face of it every token of absolute impossibility and imposture!

“The story of Herod destroying all the children under two years old belongs altogether to the book of Matthew; not one of the rest mentions anything about it. Had such a circumstance been true, the universality of it must have made it known to all of the writers; and the thing would have been too striking to have been omitted by any. This writer tells us that Jesus escaped this slaughter because Joseph and Mary were warned by an angel to flee with him into Egypt; but he forgot to make provision for John, who was then under two years of age. John, however, who stayed behind, fared as well as Jesus, who fled; and, therefore, the story circumstantially belies itself.

"Not any two of these writers agree *in reciting exactly the same words* the written inscription, short as it is, which they tell us was put over Christ when he was crucified, and besides this, Mark says he was crucified at the third hour (nine in the morning) and John says it was the sixth hour (twelve at noon).

"The inscription is thus stated in those books:

"Matthew—This is Jesus the King of the Jews.

"Mark—The King of the Jews.

"Luke—This is the King of the Jews.

"John—Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.

"We may infer from these circumstances, trivial as they are, that those writers, whoever they were, and in whatever time they lived, were not present at the scene.

"The only one of the men called apostles who appears to have been near the spot was Peter, and when he was accused of being one of Jesus' followers, it is said (Matt. xxvi. 74). '*Then began he (Peter) to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man!*' Yet we are now called to believe the same Peter, convicted, by their own account, of perjury. For what reason, or on what authority, should we do this?

"The accounts that are given of the circumstances that they tell us attended the crucifixion are differently related in those four books.

"The book ascribed to Matthew says there was darkness over all the land from the sixth hour until the ninth hour; that the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; that there was an earthquake; that the rocks rent; that the graves opened; that the bodies of many of the saints that

slept arose and came out of their graves after the resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many. Such is the account which this dashing writer of the book of Matthew gives, but in which he is not supported by the writers of the other books.

“The writer of the book ascribed to Mark in detailing the circumstances of the crucifixion, makes no mention of any earthquake, nor of the rocks rending, nor of the graves opening, nor the dead men walking out. The writer of the book of Luke is silent upon the same points. And as to the writer of the book of John, though he details all the circumstances of the crucifixion down to the burial of Christ, he says nothing about either the darkness, the veil of the temple, the earthquake, the rocks, the graves, nor the dead men.

“Now, if it had been true that those things happened, and if the writers of these books had lived at the time they did happen, and had been the persons they are said to be, namely, the four men called apostles, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, it was not possible for them, as true historians, even without the aid of inspiration, not to have recorded them. The things, supposing them to have been facts, were of too much notoriety not to have been known, and of too much importance not to have been told. All these supposed apostles must have been witnesses of the earthquake, if there had been any; for it was not possible for them to have been absent from it; the opening of the graves and the resurrection of the dead men, and their walking about the city, is of still greater importance than the earthquake. An earthquake is always possible, and natural, and proves nothing; but this opening of the

graves is supernatural, and directly in point to their doctrine, their cause, and their apostleship. Had it been true, it would have filled up whole chapters of those books, and been the chosen theme and general chorus of all the writers; but instead of this, little and trivial things and mere prattling conversation of 'He said this' and 'She said that' are often tediously detailed, while this most important of all, had it been true, is passed off in a slovenly manner by a single dash of the pen, and that by one writer only, and not so much as hinted at by the rest.

"Strange indeed that an army of saints should return to life, and nobody know who they were, nor who it was that saw them, and that not a word more should be said upon the subject, nor these saints have anything to tell us! Had it been the prophets who (as we are told) had formerly prophesied of these things, they must have had a *great deal* to say. They could have told us everything, and we should have had posthumous prophecies, with notes and commentaries upon the first, a little better at least than we have now. Had it been Moses and Aaron, and Joshua, and Samuel, and David, not an unconverted Jew had remained in all Jerusalem. Had it been John the Baptist, and the saints of the times then present, everybody would have known them, and they would have outpreached and outfamed all the other apostles. But, instead of this, these saints are made to pop up, like Jonah's gourd in the night, for no purpose at all but to wither in the morning. Thus much for this part of the story.

"The tale of the resurrection follows that of the crucifixion; and in this, as well as in that, the writers,

whoever they were, disagree so much as to make it evident that none of them were there.

“The book of Matthew states that when Christ was put in the sepulchre, the Jews applied to Pilate for a watch or a guard to be placed over the sepulchre, to prevent the body being stolen by the disciples; and that in consequence of this request, the sepulchre *was made sure, sealing the stone* that covered the mouth, and setting a watch. But the other books say nothing about this application, nor about the sealing, nor the guard, nor the watch; and, according to their accounts, there were none. Matthew, however, follows up this part of the story of the guard or the watch with a second part, that I shall notice in the conclusion, as it serves to detect the fallacy of those books.

“The book of Matthew continues its account, and says (xxviii. 1) that at the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

“Mark says it was sun-rising, and John says it was dark. Luke says it was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that came to the sepulchre; and John states that Mary Magdalene came alone. So well do they agree about their first evidence! They all, however, appear to have known most about Mary Magdalene; she was a woman of large acquaintance, and it was not an ill conjecture that she might be upon the stroll.

“The book of Matthew goes on to say (verse 2): ‘*And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came*

and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. But the other books say nothing about any earthquake, nor about the angel rolling back the stone and sitting upon it; and, according to their accounts, there was no angel sitting there. Mark says the angel was within the sepulchre, sitting on the right side. Luke says there were two, and they were both standing up; and John says they were both sitting down, one at the head and the other at the feet.

CHAPTER XXIX

“Matthew says that the angel that was sitting upon the stone on the outside of the sepulchre told the two Marys that Christ was risen, and that the women went away quickly. Mark says that the women, upon seeing the stone rolled away, and wondering at it, went into the sepulchre, and that it was the angel that was sitting within on the right side that told them so. Luke says it was the two angels that were standing up; and John says it was Jesus Christ himself that told it to Mary Magdalene; and that she did not go into the sepulchre, but only stooped down and looked in.

“Now, if the writers of these four books had gone into a court of justice to prove an alibi (for it is of the nature of an alibi that is here attempted to be proved, namely, the absence of a dead body by supernatural means), and had they given their evidence in the same contradictory manner as it is here given, they would have been in danger of having their ears cropped for perjury and would have justly deserved

it. Yet this is the evidence, and these are the books, that have been imposed upon the world as being given by divine inspiration, and as the unchangeable word of God.

“The writer of the book of Matthew, after giving this account, relates a story that is not to be found in any other of the books, and which is the same I have just before alluded to.

“‘Now,’ says he (that is after the conversation the women had with the angel sitting upon the stone), ‘behold, some of the watch (meaning the watch that he had said had been placed over the sepulchre) came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done; and when they were assembled with the elders and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, that his disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept; and if this come to the governor’s ears, we will persuade him and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught; and this saying (that his disciples stole him away) is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.’ The expression, *until this day*, is an evidence that the book ascribed to Matthew was not written by Matthew, and that it has been manufactured long after the times and things of which it pretends to treat; for the expression implies a great length of intervening time. It would be inconsistent in us to speak in this manner of anything happening in our own time. To give, therefore, intelligible meaning to the expression, we must suppose a lapse of some generations at least, for this manner of speaking carries the mind back to ancient time.

“The absurdity also of the story is worth noticing;

for it shows the writer of the book of Matthew to have been an exceedingly weak and foolish man. He tells a story that contradicts itself in point of possibility; for though the guard, if there were any, might be made to say that the body was taken away while they were *asleep*, and to give that as a reason for their not having prevented it, that same sleep must also have prevented their knowing how and by whom it was done; and yet they are made to say it was the disciples who did it. Were a man to tender his evidence of something he should say was done, and of the manner of doing it, and of the person who did it, while he was asleep and could know nothing of the matter, such evidence could not be received; it will do well enough for Testament evidence, but not for anything where truth is concerned.

"I now come to that part of the evidence in those books that respects the pretended appearance of Christ after his pretended resurrection.

"The writer of the book of Matthew relates that the angel that was sitting on the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre said to the two Marys (xxviii. 7), '*Behold, he (Christ) goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.*' And the same writer at the next two verses (9, 10) makes Christ himself to speak to the same purpose to these women immediately after the angel had told it to them, and that they ran quickly to tell it to the disciples; and, at the sixteenth verse, it is said, '*Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them; and when they saw him, they worshiped him.*'

"But the writer of the book of John tells us a story

very different from this; for he says (xx. 19), ‘*Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week* (that is, the same day that Christ is said to have risen), *when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst.*’

“According to Matthew, the eleven were marching to Galilee to meet Jesus in a mountain, by his own appointment, at the very time when, according to John, they were assembled in another place, and that not by appointment, but in secret, for fear of the Jews.

“The writer of the book of Luke (xxiv. 13, 33, 36) contradicts that of Matthew more pointedly than John does; for he says expressly that the meeting was in *Jerusalem*, the evening of the same day that he (Christ) rose, and that the *eleven* were *there*.

“Now, it is not possible, unless we admit these supposed disciples the right of willful lying, that the writer of these books could be any of the eleven persons called disciples; for if, according to Matthew, the eleven went into Galilee to meet Jesus in a mountain by his own appointment, on the same day that he is said to have risen, Luke and John must have been two of that eleven; yet the writer of Luke says expressly, and John implies as much, that the meeting was that same day, in a house in Jerusalem; and, on the other hand, if, according to Luke and John, the *eleven* were assembled in a house in Jerusalem, Matthew must have been one of that eleven; yet Matthew says the meeting was in a mountain in Galilee, and consequently the evidence given in those books destroys each other.

“The writer of the book of Mark says nothing about

any meeting in Galilee; but he says (xvi. 12) that Christ, after his resurrection, appeared in another form to two of them, as they walked into the country, and that these two told it to the residue, who would not believe them. Luke also tells a story, in which he keeps Christ employed the whole of the day of this pretended resurrection until the evening, and which totally invalidates the account of going to the mountain in Galilee. He says that two of them, without saying which two, went that same day to a village called Emmaus, threescore furlongs (seven miles and a half) from Jerusalem, and that Christ, in disguise, went with them, and stayed with them unto the evening, and supped with them, and then vanished out of their sight, and reappeared that same evening at the meeting of the eleven in Jerusalem.

“This is the contradictory manner in which the evidence of this pretended reappearance of Christ is stated; the only point in which the writers agree is the skulking privacy of that reappearance; for whether it was in the recess of a mountain in Galilee, or in a shut-up house in Jerusalem, it was still skulking. To what cause then are we to assign this skulking? On the one hand, it is directly repugnant to the supposed or pretended end—that of convincing the world that Christ was risen; and, on the other hand, to have asserted publicity of it would have exposed the writers of those books to public detection, and, therefore, they have been under the necessity of making it a private affair.”

I have quoted at a goodly length from Thomas

Paine for several reasons; one is, this quotation is very edifying, and in regard to circumstance, time and place, you will find his deductions are correct and to the point. While Mr. Paine labors to prove that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were not as represented, namely, four of his apostles who were close attendants during this period of Christ's miracles and ministry; while he labors in this direction, my work has been laid out in another: that Christ's teachings do not bespeak or lead Reason to believe that Christ is of divine origin, more than are the rest of erring mankind.

Therefore, Mr. Paine's deductions, coupled with those of mine, it would seem, must impress the truth-seeker that there is something badly out of gear with this orthodox machinery.

The fact is, dear reader, in this maelstrom of apocryphal scripture, the clashing of the creeds, the controversies and crusades between Christian and infidel, the fight between what looked like rational deductions and irrational dogma, in Thomas Paine's time, had submerged the truth to that extent that it was not recognizable throughout what was called the civilized world.

The clouds of the "Dark Ages" were still impenetrable to human vision in Thomas Paine's day, and are lowering still, but there are rifts in these clouds now that permit the sunlight of Truth to appear to those who seek.

I wish to call your attention to the closing remarks of this quotation of Mr. Paine's—where he speaks of the skulking manner in which Christ appeared after his resurrection, and more particularly where he ap-

peared to the eleven in the closed room in Jerusalem. Whether this happened just as recorded or not is not pertinent to the case; but to those who understand, it is evident here is a case that parallels a modern case of spirit materialization, and this, I have no reason to doubt, occurred.

Since this Christ account has reached us in the manner in which it has, with the Papal Church as sponsor for all that Christ said or did, and as their ambition was to build up a hierarchy for priestly power and revenue, the wonder is that there is a trace of spiritual truth preserved that is discernible.

The data is but little; but when this is coupled with certain things embodied in the teachings of Paul, it is evident that Spiritualism underlies the whole thing; and this, coupled with modern revelation, proves that Spiritualism is dimly outlined throughout these ancient writings, and is to stand out in bold relief as the human soul develops.

Now let us see what St. Paul says in regard to spiritual gifts: 1 Cor. xii., beginning with the chapter—*“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.”* Who this Holy Ghost is is not clear; but that he is an unfleshed entity that has been an inhabitant of this earth at some time there is no doubt. *“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administra-*

tions, but the same Lord. (Lord here is synonymous with spirit.) *And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God (spirit) which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge. (What is meant here is trance speaking or writing.) To another faith by the same Spirit. (The moving of ponderable bodies; levitation.) To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit. To another the working of miracles (there are several phases, we assume, are here included, like the passing of matter through matter, etc.); to another prophecy; to another the discerning of spirits (clairvoyance); to another divers kinds of tongues (speaking in different languages); to another the interpretation of tongues (this explains itself). But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he (the spirit) will.*

I will now invite your attention to another spirit manifestation, contained in 2 Cor. xii. 1-5: "*It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord (spirit). I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter*" (margin not possible). Here is a case of what is called externalization. This is a phase of

spirit manifestation that thousands can testify to, which I will speak of again later.

The conversion of Paul recorded in Acts ix. is another case in point of spirit manifestation which is perfectly palpable to the initiated.

The rational conclusion is that Christ had a resurrection and an ascension, just as does every individual who leaves the mortal form, and takes his or her place in the realm of spirit, where their conduct in earth-life properly places them.

And that Christ had a knowledge of Spiritualism, and the law relating to spirit return and spirit communion; and that he taught this doctrine, and manifested himself to his friends after his crucifixion or death, there is no doubt.

Before concluding my exegesis of the Bible, I feel it would be incomplete were I not to make a quotation from our late friend, Moses Hull, on "Our Bible; Who Wrote It," page 380:

"The Westminster Confession of Faith, and Dean Burgan, have both been quoted to show that it has been and still is with some Christians the belief that the Bible is God's full and only revelation—that it is plenarily inspired, and that no other word will ever be heard from God until the world is summoned to judgment. It is also affirmed that by God's especial care ('singular care and providence' is the language of the Confession of Faith) this book has been kept pure in all ages. To this might be added statements to the same effect from Dr. Lardner, Bishop Horne, Watson, Paley, Rev. David Nelson, and other eighteenth and nineteenth century theologians.

"Paley, McIlvane and Patterson all make arguments which, when reduced to logical forms, must amount to about this: Demand and supply are co-extensive and co-eternal. One never can exist without the other. If water had never existed there could never have been thirst, or a demand for water. Food is adapted to the stomach, and the stomach to the work of digesting food. Indeed, there is no other use for food except to put into the stomach, and the stomach has no other function than to digest food.

"Light would be of little use to us if we had no eyes, and eyes would be useless without light. So of the ear, it is adapted to catch sound, and sound is absolutely useless were there no ear. After repeating this argument in various forms of phraseology for many pages, the authors usually bring it to a climax with the assertion that when God was making appetites for men, he placed within them an appetite—a hunger or thirst for revelation—a desire to hear from God. Inasmuch as this desire for a revelation is in man, wherever found, and inasmuch as God has given no man desires or appetites for which he has not provided a means of gratification, he must have provided man with a revelation from himself.

"The argument when reduced to something like a syllogistic formula is about as follows:

"1. Man's maker has provided the means for the gratification of his every appetite.

"2. Man has an appetite for a revelation from God;

"3. Therefore, man's maker has provided for him a revelation.

"This is Logic. I think it is good logic; but logic which proves too much proves nothing, and as this proves too much it is fatal to the one who uses it to prove the doctrine set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith, that the Bible is God's only revelation.

"The minor proposition says, man has an appetite for a revelation from God; that would make a foundation for another syllogism, which should be stated as follows:

"1. Man has an appetite for revelations from the supermundane world;

"2. The Buddhists and the Brahmins are men;

"3. Therefore, the Buddhists and the Brahmins have an appetite for revelations from the supermundane world.

"Now let the major proposition become the foundation for another syllogistic argument as follows:

"1. God has provided for the gratification of every appetite of Brahmins, Buddhists, and Christians;

"2. Brahmins, Buddhists, and Christians have appetites alike for a revelation from God;

"3. Therefore, God has prepared a revelation for Brahmins, Buddhists, and Christians.

"This staple Christian argument, under review, asserts that the appetite for a revelation from God proves the existence of such revelation; if this is true, will not a similar appetite prove the same for those who never heard of the Bible, or of Christianity? If it does not, then there is a fallacy somewhere in the learned logic of these Christian gentlemen. How would it do to say, God has provided for humanity's every appetite?

"But he has provided no revelation for the South Sea Islanders ;

"Therefore, the South Sea Islanders are not human beings.

"These *reductio ad absurdum* arguments might be followed indefinitely, but I do not propose to pursue them farther.

"Does it not seem strange that if God is as these writers suppose, under obligation to give man a revelation, he did not see his duty before some evil power got around with so many false revelations?

"How strange that his Satanic Majesty was permitted to overload the most enlightened people of the world with the counterfeit so long before the genuine existed. Not only were there counterfeit Bibles, but think of the Avatars or Saviors who counterfeited our Savior hundreds of years before he was born! Such mysteries as these are among the greatest of the mysteries of Godliness."

I was much interested not long since in having an opportunity to examine and peruse a copy of "The Apocryphal New Testament." I did not know until then that there was such a volume extant.

I premise there are many ignorant of this volume. So I will place here a few words in explanation. This volume contains, in my judgment, about as much matter as does the canonical one, omitting the Gospels. This Apocryphal New Testament is the result of the matter rejected by the Nicene Council and throws much light upon the New Testament Scripture. I will quote briefly from the preface of this volume, and then give

you a sample from the Testament matter which remained under the table.

This from the Preface:

“The Editor has been charged with expressing too little veneration for the councils of the church” (he says). “He feels none. It is true that respecting the three hundred Bishops assembled at the Council of Nice, the Emperor Constantine says, That what was approved by these Bishops could be nothing less than the determinations of God himself; since the Holy Spirit residing in such great and worthy souls unfolded to them the Divine will. Yet Sabius, the Bishop of Heraclea; affirms, that, excepting Constantine himself, and Eusebius Pamphilus, they were a set of illiterate, simple creatures that understood nothing; and Pappus seems to have estimated them very low, for in his Synodicon to the Council, he tells us, that having promiscuously put all the books that were referred to the council for determination, under the communion table in the church, they besought the Lord that the inspired writings might get upon the table while the spurious ones remained underneath, and it happened accordingly. . . .

“After eighteen centuries of bloodshed and cruelties perpetrated in the name of Christianity, it is gradually emerging from the mystifying subtleties of fathers, councils and hierarchies, and the encumbering edicts of soldier kings and papal decretals.”

“Charmed by the loveliness of its primitive simplicity, every sincere human heart will become a temple for its habitation, and every man become a priest unto himself. Thus and thus only, will be established the

religion of Him who, having the same interest with ourselves in the welfare of mankind, left us, for the rule of our happiness, the sum and substances of his code of peace and good will—‘Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.’

“By some persons of the multitude commonly known by the name of Christians, and who profess to suppose they do God’s will by calling themselves so, the Editor has been attacked with a malignity and fury that would have graced the age of Mary and Elisabeth, when Catholics put to death Protestants and Protestants put to death Catholics, for the sake of Him who commanded mankind to love one another.”

CHAPTER XXX

In the New Testament canon there is a painful silence in regard to Christ’s infancy and childhood. This gap would have been well rounded had not this, called the Apocryphal Scripture, have been rejected by the Nicene Council.

It was once a grave question with me why so illustrious a character and one of whom so much is expected and so much is promised, should be turned over to the world with so few words.

This is a good Bible story, this of this promiscuous matter being placed under the communion table, and the genuine books being selected and placed on top of the table by the power of prayer and without the aid of human hands. I think here would have been a prob-

lem beyond the power of intelligence either incarnate or excarnate, to have selected the genuine from the spurious, when the whole thing is fraud, as it unmistakably proves itself to be.

If this scripture had been placed under the communion table and this council had prayed and waited for such an expurgation to have taken place as described, it would have remained under the table—to use an oft-repeated Bible phrase—until this day, as it should: because there would have been nothing under the conditions for a resurrection.

You may be led to think I am badly contradicting myself in quoting St. Paul and then talking in this manner. Not so. I occupy the same ground as at the outset. Whether Paul ever had a *bona fide* existence or not, no mortal on earth can tell. Reaching back through the vista of two thousand years, this account, reaching us as it does, it is impossible to judge.

I take this scripture which I quote just as the searcher after gems would sift a bed of gravel. “I accept the Truth wherever found, on Christian or on heathen ground.” And what of Paul I have quoted is of great value to the truth-seeker, because of the time, place and circumstances under which it comes to us. Paul’s writings remind one of a lunatic who at rare intervals has lucid moments, and at such times must needs be watched with studious care, for he so soon relapses into incoherent incongruity, which makes up the bulk of his writings. There is a goodly share of his writings, or what is accorded to him, in this rejected scripture.

At a time when there was a demand for scripture to supply the needs of the priests, there were so many religious zealots who thought they were doing God's will by lying for Christ's sake, that the "Holy See" was surfeited with sacred writings. It was like "the old woman who lived in her shoe"—they had so much scripture they didn't know what to do: this has necessitated councils to eliminate this superabundance of scripture. It would have been wise to have burned this supernatant matter, but these councils have not always acted wisely, as is painfully apparent.

What these councils have accepted is our infallible, unchangeable word of God, which comes down to us as the result of their caprice, or that which may best serve their purpose.

Here is a chapter from this Apocryphal New Testament. Read it and reflect. This from the book called "Infancy," chapter vii. (I will omit the headings):

"They came afterwards to another city, and had a mind to lodge there. Accordingly they went to a man's house, who was newly married, but by the influence of sorcerers could not enjoy his wife: But they, lodging at his house that night, the man was freed from his disorder: And when they were preparing early in the morning to go forward on their journey, the new married person hindered them, and provided a noble entertainment for them. But going forward on the morrow, they came to another city, and saw three women going from a certain grave with great weeping. When St. Mary saw them, she spake to the girl who was their companion, saying, Go and inquire of them, what is the matter with them, and what misfortune

has befallen them. When the girl asked them, they made her no answer, but asked her again, Who are ye and where are ye going? For the day is far spent, and the night is at hand. We are travelers, saith the girl, and are seeking for an inn to lodge at. They replied, Go along with us, and lodge with us. They then followed them, and were introduced into a new house, well furnished with all sorts of furniture. It was now wintertime and the girl went into the parlor where these women were, and found them weeping and lamenting as before. By them stood a mule covered over with silk, and an ebony collar hanging down from his neck, whom they kissed and were feeding. But when the girl said, How handsome, ladies, the mule is! they replied with tears, and said, This mule which you see was our brother, born of this same mother as we: For when our father died, and left us a very large estate and we had only this brother, and we endeavored to procure him a suitable match, and thought he should be married as other men, some giddy and jealous woman bewitched him without our knowledge. And so one night a little before day, while the doors of the house were all fast shut, saw this our brother changed into a mule, such as you see him to be; and we in the melancholy condition in which you see us, having no father to comfort us, have applied to all the wise men, magicians and diviners in the world, but they have been of no service to us. As often therefore as we find ourselves oppressed with grief, we rise and go with this our mother to our father's tomb, where, when we have cried sufficiently we return home. When the girl had heard this, she said, Take courage and cease

your fears, for you have a remedy for your afflictions near at hand, even among you and in the midst of your house. For I was also leprous; but when I saw this woman, and her little infant with her, whose name is Jesus, I sprinkled my body with the water with which his mother had washed him, and I was presently made well. And I am certain that he is also capable of relieving you under your distress. Wherefore, arise, go to my mistress Mary, and when you have brought her into your own parlor, disclose to her the secret, at the same time earnestly beseeching her to compassionate your case. As soon as the women had heard the girl's discourse, they hastened away to the lady St. Mary, introduced themselves to her, and sitting down before her they wept and said, O our Lady St. Mary, pity your handmaids, for we have no head of our family, and no one older than us; no father or brother to go in and out before us. But this mule which you see was our brother, which some woman by witchcraft has brought into this condition which you see: We therefore entreat you to compassionate us. Hereupon St. Mary was grieved at their case, and taking the Lord Jesus, put him upon the back of the mule. And said to her son, O Jesus Christ, restore (or heal) according to thy extraordinary powers this mule, and grant him to have again the shape of a man and a rational creature, as he had formerly. This was scarcely said by the Lady St. Mary, but the mule immediately passed into a human form, and became a young man without any deformity. Then he and his mother and the sisters worshipped the Lady St. Mary, and lifting the child upon their heads, they kissed

him, and said, Blessed is thy mother, O Jesus, O Savior of the world! Blessed are the eyes which are so happy as to see thee. Then both the sisters told their mother, saying, Of a truth our brother is restored to his former shape by the help of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the kindness of that girl, who told us of Mary and her son. And inasmuch as our brother is unmarried, it is fit we marry him to this girl their servant. When they had consulted Mary in this matter, and she had given her consent, they made a splendid wedding for this girl. And so their sorrow being turned into gladness, and their mourning into mirth, they began to rejoice, and to make merry and to sing, being dressed in their richest attire, with bracelets; Afterwards they glorified and praised God, saying, O Jesus son of David, who changest sorrow into gladness, and mourning into mirth! After this Joseph and Mary tarried there ten days, then went away, having received great respect from those people. Who when they took their leave of them, and returned home, cried, But especially the girl."

You say you do not believe this chapter from this Apocryphal New Testament plenarily inspired of God. Can you tell why? If it had been accepted by the councils that have set for the purpose of determining which is and which is not plenarily inspired, and you had been so instructed by the clergy and from the catechism from early childhood, how do you think you might then believe? Is it more irrational than the story of Christ's raising Lazarus, who had been buried four days? The moral tone of this chapter is certainly

up to the average of what has been accepted. You still insist you do not believe it. For what purpose was it written? It was written to be believed. It was written cotemporaneous with the writings that go to make up our New Testament, and the writer has been fired with a zeal that he was doing God's service by producing literature to substantiate the whole. Is it more unbelievable than the story of Jonah and the whale and scores of miracles and stories recorded in the Old and New Testament? Then why not believe this chapter? I will not insist farther, because I certainly don't believe it, nor any more do I believe the part preserved and called sacred, in the manner in which it is given and taught.

It is an absurd account built up to support, if possible, a more absurd doctrine! That is the doctrine of Vicarious Atonement, or Scapegoat Salvation.

Now, just to give you an object lesson in regard to the contradictory state in which this New Testament teaching is given to us. I refer you to Paul's epistle to the Galatians (vi. 7): "*Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap.*" Just observe how emphatic Paul speaks here in giving this lesson, and just consider what he says. This knocks the whole doctrine of atonement, and the forgiveness of sins, clean out of the reckoning; it eliminates the mediatorial power from both the orthodox Christ and from the Holy Papal See the forgiveness of sin.

So, if Paul tells the truth here, the repentant thief on the cross did not enter the gates of Paradise "scot free" from his iniquities, as we are taught.

It is rationally proven that the primitive Christ, and

the primitive Paul, both taught Spiritualism the same as it is given to us from the angel world to-day. But by priestly interpolation and perversion this has to be read to a great extent between the lines.

The Bible, then, boiled down, amounts to this: After eliminating all superfluous matter, we have a small remainder that is pertinent to the human race. This small remainder is all we have in answer to Job's question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" The proof in the affirmative to this question is all that can amount to anything to us; and what we get in proof of this is all of value there is in this big Book, the Bible.

Now, there was something in the early Biblical age that his tribal God so abhorred that the victim was to be cut off without the preliminary of judge or jury; that was communing with a decarnate intelligence (familiar spirit). From this crime there was no reprieve or pardon, nothing could appease God's wrath but the life of the offender.

This evinces the existence of spirit intelligences, and spirit communion. The woman of En-dor belonged to this class, and Samuel communed with Saul through her gift of mediumship. Samuel, you will observe (though called a man of God), was in possession of a gift identical with that of the woman of En-dor. Christ was without doubt in possession of this gift to a high degree, but what he has said and done has been so obliterated by priestly strategy that were it not for the light shed upon it by Paul it could not well be recognized. But Paul, speaking of spiritual gifts, considering the tampering that this Scripture has underwent, brings this Truth to the surface unmistakably clear. That Paul was in possession of this gift, and

where he speaks of being carried to the third heaven is additional proof. And where he says to the Galatians, "For whatsoever a man sow, that shall he reap," is directly in contradistinction to the orthodox doctrine, and in perfect harmony with what is now handed down to us from the angel world. So it is but rational to conclude this is where Paul caught it from and thought this much lawful to utter.

What is this gift that in remote antiquity was so detested, and has caused the death angel to spread his wings as far as churchanity has spread, America not exempted, and yet makes Paul a Saint in any time and this son of Mary a God?

My friends, here is a thing that all must admit. Man's estate would be dark indeed if everything in nature and nature's law pointed to the grave as the goal of all human ambition! Yet this belief seems to have a large following; but this I believe to be the result of centuries upon centuries of false teaching.

The proof that man, under correct conditions while in the mortal, can hold converse with those who have lived here and passed to higher life is, I believe, entirely satisfactory, as I expect to show in the sequel of this work.

Can orthodoxy consistently oppose Spiritualism upon this ground? It could hardly look so; but nevertheless it does; and the controversy has been on now for about sixty years, since the first rappings at Higlesville, between the orthodox creeds founded upon their version of the Scripture, and Spiritualism, proved from this same Bible and verified by present-day fact. During this protracted crusade I do not think that

either of the belligerents have wished to call to use the fagot or the sword; the civilized world has pretty well outgrown that method of settling religious differences. But the pen and the press have been employed, together with the power of oratory, and in this way there have been grape and canister, chain shot, shells, and hot shot thrown till at times it would seem the very ramparts of heaven and hell must give way, St. Peter's gate and all, and sink into indiscriminate chaos and ruin!

Has Spiritualism won any victories? I have no statistics at hand, so cannot give any correct figures, but am certain orthodoxy has made some concessions. But this, I suppose, they would deny laying to our cause. Their hell has been revised and improved and made more comfortable. The small children have been removed so that their noise will not so disturb the old folks. They still carry on their perfunctory preaching, but it is evident it has been much modified within the last sixty years.

I here offer in evidence several samples of the old-time preaching, which I well remember the tone when I was a boy:

"When they (the saints) shall see how great the misery is from which God hath saved them, and how great a difference He hath made between their state and the state of others who were by nature and perhaps by practice no more sinful and ill-deserving than they, it will give them more a sense of the wonderfulness of God's grace to them. Every time they look upon the damned, it will excite in them a lively and admiring sense of the grace of God in making them so

to differ. The sight of hell torments will exalt the happiness of the saints forever.”—(Rev. Emmons’ Sermons, xi.)

“The happiness of the elect in heaven will, in part, consist in witnessing the torments of the damned in hell. And among these it may be their own children, parents, husbands, wives, and friends on earth. One part of the business of the blessed is to celebrate the doctrine of reprobation. While the decree of reprobation is eternally executing on the vessels of wrath, the smoke of their torment will be eternally ascending in view of the vessels of mercy, who, instead of taking the part of those miserable objects, will say, Amen, hallelujah, praise the Lord.”—(Rev. Emmons’ Sermons, xvi.)

“When the damned have drunken whole draughts of brimstone one day, they must do the same another day. The eye shall be tormented with the sight of devils, the ears with the hideous yelling and outcries of the damned in flames, the nostrils shall be smothered, as it were, with brimstone; the tongue, the hand, the foot, and every part shall fry in flames.”—(Rev. Ambrose, *Discourse on Doomsday*.)

“The godly wife shall applaud the justice of the Judge in the condemnation of her ungodly husband. The godly husband shall say amen to the damnation of her who lay on his bosom. The godly parents shall say hallelujah at the passing of the sentence of their ungodly child. And the godly child shall from the heart approve the damnation of his wicked parents who begot him and the mother who bore him.”—(Rev. Thos. Bostin’s *Fourfold State*, p. 336.)

I will here leave comment with the reader.

Christ is said to have taught with parables. We are taught to be Christlike. So I will attempt a present-day parable.

Behold, two farmers settle at the same time in the same neighborhood, their houses being but a few rods apart. These farmers are both Christians, belonging to the same church; and each expresses a desire to each to live in peace and fellowship with each other. Farmer No. 1 concludes, in order to insure peace, he will mount a modern gun to bear upon his neighbor's house from his window, which, he reasons, will be a safeguard against brotherly disruption. Farmer No. 2 takes in the situation, and considers this wise and prudent, but at the same time thinks it does not look well for his domicile to stand thus defenseless, so he calls a council of his household and they vote to place two guns to bear upon the house of farmer No. 1. This calls for a meeting of the members of the house of farmer No. 1 to deliberate upon the situation, and they decide to determine the caliber and make of the guns of farmer No. 2, and to plant four larger and in every way superior guns to bear direct upon farmer No. 2's house. This calls for an extra session of the members of farmer No. 2, and after much deliberation and argument decide to place a Gatling gun to cover farmer No. 1's house and all of his grounds. This has been expensive, and they both have well-nigh exhausted their means by these measures to insure peace. And fences have been neglected, and farmer No. 1's cow breaks the fence and destroys thirty heads of farmer No. 2's cabbage. Farmer No. 1 offers to placate half of this

loss, as the fence was a matter between them both to keep in repair, and both had neglected it. He was coldly received by farmer No. 2 and informed that the matter must be left to the common council of his household, as they were alike all interested. No. 2 summons these members. They meet; they argue; they deliberate; they vote. And they reason in this wise: that No. 1 was the man to plant the first gun; and that the purchase of this ordnance and all of these munitions of war has been a great expense, and all for nothing, unless they are used, and that our honor is at stake, and that the offense warrants action, and that we, to preserve our standing in the eyes of the neighborhood, must open fire and preserve our honor.

This, my friends, is one manner of fruit that this tree of Churchanity, misnamed Christianity, after twenty centuries of priestly pruning, bears! This is the attitude of Christian nations toward each other all over the face of our earth. Is it not evident there is a mistake somewhere?

Orthodox theology was well entrenched centuries before Modern Spiritualism had its birth, and it is evident that the fight will be a protracted one.

“Let those who have failed take courage,
 Though the enemy seems to have won;
 Though his ranks are strong if he be in the wrong,
 The battle is not yet done.
 For sure as the morning follows
 The hours of darkest night,
 No question is ever settled,
 Until it is settled right.”

PART II

CHAPTER I

LATE in the summer of 1908, about six months ago, the Methodist minister of our town announced that he was going to preach a series of sermons upon specific subjects and his first was to be on the subject of Spiritualism: Feeling a deep interest in what one of his cloth might have to say upon this subject I went to hear him. I usually attend this church at day service, but this was in the evening, however, I went. It proved to be a typical orthodox sermon on Spiritualism, which would be expressed more correctly had he have said, a sermon against Spiritualism. His congregation seemed highly pleased, and he seemed well satisfied with his effort. (He is an eloquent preacher.) I just thought Mr. Preacher I will let you know that there is one in this town that dare meet you in opposition to your fossilized theology. So I addressed him this invitation or challenge:

Aug. 31, 1908.

Dear Sir:

When I was informed that you were going to give your congregation a sermon on the subject of Spiritualism, was solicitous in regard to what you might have to say on the subject, was much interested in your discourse, but could not fail to discover throughout that there was a shading of sarcasm, or an inclination toward ridicule and burlesque, that you spoke in very deprecating terms of the woman of En-dor, you also

seemed to discriminate against your grandmother, in having an equal opportunity with the rest of your friends who have crossed the great divide from communicating to friends in earthlife.

Now for certain reasons, a few which I will nominate, I invite you to hold a friendly debate, at such time and place as may suit all concerned or interested, and as may be arranged by a committee appointed for said purpose.

Here are a few reasons which force themselves uppermost, and make it incumbent upon me to submit to you this invitation:

1.—I hold that the proper study of mankind is to determine what truth is, and to apply every test available to discriminate truth from error or falsehood.

2.—If by faith or knowledge we believe in a future life, or a continued life and this belief is called religion I hold that each individual has a right to the very best religion that the proof warrants.

3.—That each individual should be willing and glad to compare his religion with that of any other creed or faith, and should even invite discussions that comparisons may be drawn and beliefs changed.

4.—It is evident in taking but a cursory survey of the world to-day with all the conflicting creeds, beliefs and unbeliefs, that error is tremendously in evidence.

5.—That there is no reason why one individual should be more interested in the question of a life to follow this than another, or the condition in which a future life may place him.

Hence this challenge or invitation to this debate. Spiritualism vs. The Bible, as a revelation from God and the creeds built thereon, or vice versa.

Should this proposition meet your approval which I am inclined to think will; please advise me through the mail soon, and we will attend to this matter as soon as arrangements can be made.

Yours For Truth and Progress,

SAMUEL HOTCHKISS.

The good preacher's reply came promptly, stating that he would be pleased to meet me in debate; but just at this time he lost a little child and told me the matter would have to be deferred for a time, but for me to call soon and we would talk it over. I called a few evenings later, but he had concluded that it was not advisable to discuss this question with me. While I aimed to act desirous for joining issue with him, but to tell the truth I was not anxious, because I had this book in mind, and as the debate would have reached but few ears the most of the sweetness would have been lost upon the desert air. So this book is substantially my argument had the fight have taken place.

I feel that I shall enjoy this part of my work much better than the preceding part. I feel like the boy who has to churn before he can go out to play; and I now feel that this task is done, and that without doubt we can find something pleasant for our amusement. It will be necessary though to stop a moment and consider what we are or "what is man." Man has been a wonder to himself ever since he discovered that he was here. Science has interrogated him in every conceivable manner; with retort and crucible his ashes have been analyzed, and with grave circumspection, it is announced that man is made up of ambient matter. The evolutionist has critically examined the contour of his bones and

drawn comparisons between them and the bones of the ape and chimpanzee, and declare that there is such a striking analogy, that man has been evolved by a tedious process from these lower forms of life; rudimentary muscles in man, also the vermiform appendix has been learnedly discussed, with the final decision that man is the result of evolution. The only drawback to their theory is the missing link, and we hear that this has been found several times a year in different magazines and periodicals.

The materialistic limb of evolution tells us that life is the result of a chemical arrangement of the material of which our bodies are composed, and our passing out is equivalent to extinguishing a burning candle; that when life is extinct the tragedy is ended. Is this pleasant to believe? That could make but little difference. We have got to be led by the facts; what science and evolution have proven in regard to the components of a human body, post-mortem, I would not think of questioning.

But before rendering our final decision to a case fraught with so great interest we have got to examine all the evidence obtainable. Were the materialists' claim true what a mistake has "Infinite Intelligence" made; to evolve a being capable of contemplating and in a measure of appreciating the vastness of his works; and with infinite power, could raise us to a higher plane of being, which we have reason to premise as easy as to do as what he has done.

To believe in materialism, is akin to the belief that the Infinite has aborted at a very untimely stage in the creative process. But I will not take up the time in

opposing "materialism." I do not believe an intelligent human being can become so besotted as to find consolation in a belief so absolutely devoid of hope.

It seems to be almost universal, that mankind feels dissatisfied with his life and its surroundings; of lost opportunities; of mistakes made, with the time for correcting passed; a feeling that we were created for a better station in life than the one we occupy; that if we could relive our lives, we would choose a road that would lead to better fields of happiness; a vain longing for something better than we have known. This feeling is so prevalent, that great men of thought have declared that a life was not worth the living. Why should a human life be freighted with such a melancholy load as this if death ends all. If materialism were true these feelings could only be regarded as human frailties, and moral conduct but a matter of policy; and when an opportunity offers that we can defraud our fellow man and escape the civil law, to do it and regard remorse as a human frailty. "Scapegoat" salvation and Materialism, in regard to conduct, point in the same direction. In the one case you can shirk responsibility and in the other case responsibility is eliminated; and between the two and their concomitant evils, things in this world are not as they should be. The civilized world governments are bad, and when fraud and dishonesty stand out in bold perspicuity, how can the plebeian be expected to be law-abiding. Mr. Bryan and Mr. Taft may point out defects in governmental affairs, but when our President is allowed \$75,000 per annum, and hundreds of thousands of his subjects are without work and the necessities of life, shows there is something wrong. This same

extravagance pervades every department of our government, and the church too seems to have the same ambition, and increased emolument seems to be their leading thought. Where is the remedy for all of the existing evils in our land? Are we to look for it through legislation or through the church? These have both been in force for a long time but the evil has not been removed, but graft seems to be on the increase. I firmly believe that the root of this evil is in a misunderstanding of the laws of the Almighty; that we are not in tune with the Infinite; that we have been mis-taught.

I firmly believe that the hope of the world for better conditions for all classes is vested in a knowledge of Spiritualism.

What is Spiritualism? And what are its claims? My answer is, that man is a dual creature; that he is made up of a mortal body and a spirit body, that the spirit body is released from the mortal body at death and is translated to the spirit plane to which his earth-life and conduct gravitate him; and here he continues to live and may improve in soul-growth and progress to higher planes throughout the cycles of eternity. These spirit planes are to their inhabitants as substantial and tangible to them, as this material plane of existence is to us. To make it plainer, instead of our being a body with a spirit, we are a spirit possessing a body, and this earth is the spirit's first plane of existence, and the mortal body is the instrument through which the spirit first manifests. Very well; but how do you know this to be so? My friends, the answer to this question will occupy the remainder of this volume. I do not pre-

tend to say, but it requires patient thought and study, to grasp the meaning of the claims of Spiritualism; what we learn in this life all comes through mental effort, and why should we expect this to come gratuitously. Of course we will find out these things if they be true when the change of death overtakes us, but it has been made possible to get the proof while on this plane, and this may save us in many cases years of pain and sorrow.

What has led me to a belief in Spiritualism? I will tell you; about nine years ago a relative of my wife sent us a few copies of a spiritual paper. I read them, but did not endorse what I read. I thought if what was claimed were true I would have heard of it before; that things like this would spread like contagion and would be in everybody's mouth, and would be an open secret to all. But I sent a dollar to the address of the paper, and concluded I would read and reflect. The paper came in due season, and in it could be read ad's like this: "Bangs Sisters, Phenomenal Psychic Portraits of departed friends a specialty. Independent. Slate and Paper writing." Then in the columns could be read accounts of certain ones who had held engagements with them either for a writing or a portrait, detailed in every particular, with the canvas on a frame, placed in a window in full light of day, and the portrait forming on said canvas with no visible hand touching it, and the work being executed in but a few minutes of time, and with entire satisfaction to the patron, every detail of the work evincing the touch of a master hand exceeding in delicacy of finish anything that could be done by mortal hand. I will give a testimonial by Lyman C.

Howe, a prominent lecturer and writer on Spiritualism: "On the 20th of July, 1897, I engaged a sitting with the Bangs Sisters, at Lily Dale, for the purpose of obtaining a picture of our daughter Maud. On the 22nd of July the sitting occurred.

"We selected a clean white canvas from several which appeared to be alike, and after marking it in eight places, I placed it under a plain pine table without drawers or any visible machinery, or paints, brushes, or other utensils, and closed it in by wrapping curtains around the table and securing them by laying slates on them as they were folded over the edge of the table.

"The table was in the middle of the room and no deception was possible.

"The two sisters, Lizzie and May Bangs,—Mrs. Howe and myself were all the visible persons in the room. After sitting with our hands on the table about fifteen minutes, we withdrew and sat or stood, or walked about the room as we pleased, no one touching the table or offering to raise the curtains until, at my request, we looked in to see the picture as it was in outline, but with no coloring. At that time the canvas was not removed nor exposed to the light for more than thirty seconds. After another hour and a half sitting, during which time both the girls were in plain view, and did not at any time touch the table or the curtains, the signal was given that it was finished. I took it out, and I know it had not been removed after I put it in, and found a perfect picture of our darling Maud, in every particular true to life. During the sitting there were two photographs of Maud enclosed in a sealed

envelope and placed against the lower back side of the canvas.

"These had not been opened or in any way exposed to view until the sitting was closed. The sisters had never seen her, and so far as I know and believe they had never seen her photo. The picture is unlike either photo, and is more perfect and lifelike than any photograph she ever had. During the sitting I mentally asked her to have a yellow rose in her hair, and to write her name 'Maud' on the lower margin; and when the picture came out the rose appeared in her hair, and 'Maud' is written on the lower margin as I mentally requested. No one but myself and the spirit knew what I had asked until the picture was finished. It is the most beautiful and satisfactory phenomenon I ever witnessed."

While I am in the business I will give a clipping from *The Progressive Thinker* along the same line by these same mediums, The "Bangs Sisters," written by Clara Watson of Jamestown, N. Y., Nov. 23, 1901:

MR. EDITOR:

I would like to place before your readers, so far as human language can portray, an experience in which the writer played an interesting part. I think it is known to the people of Jamestown, at least to those who know me, that I am not given to the upholding of frauds, nor to speaking of untruths, and what I am about to relate is absolute fact and can be attested to by five other reliable witnesses. There have been at Lily Dale during the season, and many seasons before as well, two persons familiarly known as the Bangs

Sisters. These ladies, for ladies they are, are mediums for one of the very highest expressions of art, that of picturing the "human face divine," and their process of "taking pictures" baffles the keenest intellect and transcends all known methods of Portraiture.

The work produced through these mediums or psychics is of the highest order and the time required in which to produce a perfect likeness of a person, living or dead, seems incredible to one not having witnessed the phenomena, but the conditions under which it occurs utterly precludes the possibility of deception in any form. The portrait secured, the process thereof of which I wish to speak, was that of my father Eliphalet Mitchell, well known in Jamestown, who passed from earth conditions just three months ago. Our party, six in number, entered a well lighted apartment. The room was thoroughly examined, and nothing uncanny was found, nor the slightest trace of traps or wires, or paraphernalia of any kind, nothing even in the line of an artist's outfit—not a brush, or pencil, or chalk, or paint. One of our number selected at random two pure white artist's canvasses, with stemback finish, from a quantity of the same, these canvases each being stretched on a wooden frame.

The two canvases were placed the face sides tightly together, and then rested in an upright position upon a simple board table (the table having been previously scrutinizingly examined) in front of a window, the canvases being about a foot from the glass and held in place by the two sisters, one on either side; the light in the room was then somewhat lessened to afford better opportunity to view the development of the picture, by

the transmitted light from the window through the canvas, but the room was not dark, every object being discernible, the forms, features and hands of the mediums, the latter simply holding the frames, being visible all the time, the light being sufficient to tell the time by a watch. I had with me a photograph of my father taken three years ago, but it was not seen by the sisters, nor had they any knowledge of its appearance. We sat about ten minutes in eager expectancy and yet during the time engaged in pertinent conversation, when the canvas began to assume a darkened hue.

Gradually the shading deepened and widened, but leaving a lighter shaded center; presently a pinkish coloration appeared at the top of the canvas, gradually lowering until it gathered as the coloring of the face. At this time the picture had the appearance of a hazy cloud without detail of form or feature. With all eyes intent upon the canvas soon the outline and features of my father's face appeared and was recognized by us all, but it was not perfect, and at the mental suggestion of one of the party that the hair was not quite like 'grandpa' immediately the face began fading out until only the outline was visible; soon, however, to reappear with the change in the hair made, and several times the face faded and reappeared in like manner with some change in accord with the mental desire of some one of the party, no word being spoken regarding the same, and this process utterly precludes the possibility that the picture had been previously stamped in any way upon the canvas, and yet the picture was not quite perfect.

"At this point in the proceedings telegraphic raps

came on the slates which were understood by the sisters, and they removed the canvas from the window and laid it upon the table and the hands of all present were placed upon the frames, and during this process the finishing touches were put on, including the white collar and shirt front. The picture now being practically finished the canvases were separated, one completely covered with the picture and background, the other remaining perfectly white, not a trace of color on it, and as the face of the two canvases were in close contact this is a remarkable feature in itself.

The portrait was then placed upright on the table in full view of all present; one of the party comparing closely the picture to the photograph, mentally observed or thought, that the wrinkles in the forehead and about the eyes were not sufficiently prominent. At once a deepening of the lines referred to was observed and remarked upon by others of the party, and the work was now finished.

The portrait is a fine representation of the form and features of my father as he was in the vigor of mature manhood, and the time occupied from the commencement of the cloudy appearance on the canvas to the completion of the splendid portrait was just fifteen minutes, and bear in mind, kind reader, that no human hands touched the canvas, save only the frames; no human fingers could get between the two canvases to work, for remember the face sides of the same were placed tightly together during the process of development. The work has been examined by critics, and pronounced by them to be of high merit. It has the appearance of pastel but its exact character is unknown. I

should have said we were given the privilege of bringing the canvas from Jamestown had we desired.

I have been a student of the great subject of Spiritualism more than a quarter of a century and this experience I consider the crowning glory along the lines of investigation. The splendid work, the straightforward manner, and the simple method of the Bangs Sisters bears no resemblance to the cheap productions and clumsy maneuverings of tricksters, and so-called expositors."

CHAPTER II

Here is the experience of but two persons, and they for this one phase of spirit manifestation, and these with the same "mediums." This includes but a very small portion of what I gleaned from my first year's study; there were many mediums, and many phases of manifestation described through the columns of this paper, which I read with deep interest, much wonder, and I must own with considerable doubt. The reader must not be misled with the idea that the paper was wholly given to recording spirit phenomena: The grand discourses on Spiritualism, the unfolding of the Spiritual philosophy and phenomena, the rules for moral conduct while on the mortal side of existence, made a deep impression upon my mind, but the thing that weighed heaviest was this: Is this true? Is it a fact that those we call dead can return to earth and communicate with those in earthlife, and, comparatively speaking, the thing has just come to light? I felt like the child picking up pebbles on the shore of eternity, how little do we know.

I had never seen a "spirit medium" and this was a matter that I interrogated at this time much; why a matter of such universal concern should be confined to a class called "Mediums" and a knowledge of heaven or hell as the case might be could only be reached or heard from through them, excited my curiosity to a point that prompted action; the climax was reached by me at the time of the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo, the summer of 1901. I went to this show ostensibly, with but little of the show on my mind. I reasoned in this way; that an independent slate writing, that is two slates fastened together, with small bits of pencil placed between. In broad daylight, if I were to receive messages from friends whose lives had terminated here, and they write in a manner to identify themselves to me on these slates and sign their names, that this would go a long way in settling the question with me. So I went to the show, and from there to Lily Dale. Lily Dale is a place familiar with a great many, but there are a great many who know nothing of it or what it is famed for. It is a Spiritual camp-meeting ground where are gathered during the summer for some time past those interested in Spiritualism. Spirit Mediums gather here and through them proof is obtained of spirit return. The Bangs Sisters were there at this time and I had placed them on my program for an independent "slate writing" I stopped at Buffalo for one day and then re-embarked for Lily Dale. I purchased at Buffalo a good-sized pair of folding slates. I remarked to the man who sold them to me: Have you any idea what use I am going to make of these slates? He said to use them for the purpose for which they were

made I suppose. I told where I was going and my object for the slates. He remarked that I would find myself beautifully fooled; that there was a man in Buffalo who had a standing challenge of \$100.00 that no such thing could be done, and that it had never been claimed. He said, you stop here when you come back and let me know. I did not tell him I would; but this voices the popular belief of the world, and that is why I speak of it here.

When I reached Lily Dale, I found the camp had adjourned for the season. I found the Bangs Sisters' cottage, and on the veranda sat a big girl; she looked at me and my slates, and asked, have you an agreement with my mother? I said no but expect one. She said no you can't, for we are packed to move and have refused over a hundred people to-day. I began to think my chance for getting fooled looked very promising, but I had now been to a good deal of trouble and did not feel like giving up easy.

There was a stranger standing by who seemed to appreciate my dilemma, and he said to me, if it is a slatewriting you are after, there (pointing to a cottage) is Keeler, he is among the best mediums in the world for that phase, (independent writing,) well after a brief conversation I went and called at Mr. Keeler's door, but saw him in the yard, I made my business known to him; he seemed to regard me with indifference, and told me he could not hold an engagement with me till the next day at 11 A. M. This disappointed me somewhat, but made up my mind to wait his time so I put up at a hotel and pondered the matter in my dreams. The next day at the appointed time I called

at his house: he said to me, have you written to the ones you wish to hear from? I said this is new to me, this is my first time with a medium, and may not understand. He took me into a well lighted room of good size and handed me a small writing pad, and told me to write to about four of my friends who had passed over; he said he did not care to see the names, he would prefer to not see them. So I concluded to not let him see them. So I wrote on the tablet while he sat on the opposite side of a table, holding the tablet so he could not see me write, folded them closely two ways, and lay them on the table; after I had written to four of my friends he told me to hold them in my hands for three or four minutes, which I did. This being done he then told me to put the billets upon the slates, and then to wrap my handkerchief around them, and tie them with a twine which I had, but before this there was put between the slates two bits of slate pencil. He then told me it might be sometime before they would be there, and we could talk upon any subject while waiting, it would make no difference what.

Well the subject of Spiritualism was uppermost in my mind then, and I talked to him of this power and how long he had been in possession of it; all this while studying him closely, he was a good weight, I would judge about two hundred, of medium height, and a blonde, honest and unostentatious in appearance, and as I would judge from appearance he seemed frank with nothing in his manner to awaken suspicion; nevertheless, I was vigilant and watched him carefully. We waited for about an hour and he seemed himself to become doubtful, and remarked that sometime he failed

to get anything, he asked me if the ones I had addressed could write? I told him they could all write when on earth. He then asked me if I was mentally fighting against their coming? I told him no; only against being imposed upon with fraud. He smiled and picked up the little tablet upon which I wrote, and wrote a few words, and held it in his hand a breath, I asked him who he was writing to? He said to his control, to see if he could find such persons as I had written to. Well in a short time from this, he said they are here now, and it was evident there had an invisible something arrived for he was shaken by some unseen power. He said to me take hold of one side of the slates, this I did while he took hold of the other side, and as true as I write this the pencils between the slates began to write, which could be heard distinctly, and I could also feel the vibration of the pencils while writing upon the slates. After the writing had continued a short time, he said to me let the slates turn over, which was done, and the writing continued for about the same length of time, when he told me it was finished. I had concluded not to undo the slates in his presence, but he said most people were anxious to look at the writing as soon as possible, I thought perhaps I was superstitious about this and undid the slates and looked in. How astonished was I, and strangely pleased to see appended to the four messages upon the slates the name written in full of those I had named on the bits of paper.

What was written on the slates? The four persons I named on the slips were my father, my mother, a sister and a cousin, who died in 1864 on Hilton Head Island, S. C., a soldier of the Civil War. My father

had been dead about eight years, my mother about twelve years, and my sister about six years.

This is what appeared above the cousin's name, in a bold round hand:

“Good morning. This does not look much as if I were in the ground, waiting for Gabriel's trump to sound, and the resurrection day to roll around, does it? I am in a life as real, substantial, as the one you are in. The spirit, not the body, is the real being, and in or out of the mortal form we live on the same. I never was dead, and never expect to be. Tell all the folks you have heard from me. I am.

JAMES A. HOTCHKISS.”

Here is what appeared over my father's name:

“To SAMUEL HOTCHKISS:

“Well, well this is a surprise and a pleasure. I never expected to get to you from the spirit life in such a real positive way as this. I want you to be assured that I am alive and well. If I am not here, how do I write this.

SOLOMON HOTCHKISS.”

Over my mother's name this was written:

“DEAR SAMUEL:

“Never again think of me as dead and gone. As I was in the fullness of mortal life and health on earth, for so I am now. I am happy and contented, and would not resume my mortal life if I could. Do not mourn

me as dead. There is no real death. I am quite myself yet, and I am conscious of your presence here now. I am affectionately,

WEALTHY G. HOTCHKISS."

This came on the slate over my sister's name:

"This is the most remarkable experience I ever went through. How did you know I could come here in this strange way and strange place? I was afraid you thought I was dead and done for long ago. But I never was more myself, never in my life, than I am at this moment. Try to think of me as alive and well, not as a corpse. I will be with you, and I will guide, guard and help you. Lovingly I am,

LYDIA J. GRAY."

On the margin of one of the slates, this was written in bright red:

"I hope I am welcome, even if uninvited.

E. H. HOTCHKISS."

To the left of what was written over my mother's name, was a spray of forget-me-nots in three colors, green, blue and yellow.

Then written diagonally across the slates, and over the pencil writing, was written with a black substance, making a broad mark with a shiny appearance, this appeared to have been written with an arm movement:

"Many are here who cannot write.

G. C."

I asked Mr. Keeler what that meant? And he said, his control wrote that. His control's name is George Christie. So said Mr. Keeler.

Who wrote this on these slates? This I consider the most important question that was ever propounded to the human race. How many answers could be obtained were this question submitted to the world. Some would say this man Keeler is a "Conjurer" and then they would relate what they had seen done by this class, which, though not just like this would be fully up to it if not ahead of this. To those who make this answer I will say this explanation is not new, and investigators have sought out among this class those who have acquired world-wide fame in this art of deception; such as, Houdan, Herman, Blitz and others, and importuned them to work this dodge and give an explanation. And while they allowed that they could deceive most people in many ways, but to do this, to make pencils write between slates, was entirely outside of their jurisdiction, and they could not do it.

Others will say they have seen this trick advertised in a catalogue, where this with a long list of other tricks were offered for sale, to satisfy a demand for this commodity by a class of credulous gullibles who would pay good money for the same.

I have heard of advertisements of this kind, but never have seen any. But do not doubt 'tis true, and that this class have in stock masks, wigs and hair, robes, and much paraphernalia for the bogus Seance room. This to the thoughtful suggests that where there is a counterfeit there must be the genuine, to borrow the imitation from. But when you write to headquarters and

order a dozen of their slatewriting tricks, their stereotyped reply will be that they are just out of them at present, but can substitute you with something better some phosphorous or some other excellent substitute. They will tell you that these things are to be used in a dark room and the spectators will all be E. Z. Marks (easy marks).

Others will say Hotchkiss was hypnotized. Pierr Keeler then took the slates and the bits of paper and fixed the thing to suit him presented them to his dupe who came away well pleased. Here is an answer made by the churchman that this is a side-show of the Devil's. Since the plan of salvation is made plain, through the New Testament Scripture by "vicarious atonement" unfolded by the clergy. This put the Devil to his trumps and he hatched this thing called Modern Spiritualism in order to hold his own.

Others will say it was a communication from the Spirit world and by the ones who signed their names; which by a law under correct conditions can be done and has been done thousands of times, and the same thing is recorded in the Scripture.

This is my answer, and this is what I not only believe but know to be true.

Dear reader, it is your privilege to think of this as you may, the world seems destined to come into this knowledge slow, and I do not expect all to believe but that there was fraud of some kind employed in this case of mine with Mr. Keeler, but the most rational solution or conclusion I can arrive at after years of thought and study, and after hearing and reading of the experience of others with this man, and with many other mediums,

is that the Spirit world is in touch with ours and that our friends whom we call dead can let us know that they still live. Since this engagement with Mr. Keeler at Lily Dale, I have learned much more of Spiritualism and have had proof that would be impossible for me to lightly set aside. I have had that proven to me, which is of more value than were I to hold in "fee simple" the whole of New York State, and thereby be deprived of this glorious truth called "Modern Spiritualism."

Modern Spiritualism, and I made our "debut" in this world both in the selfsame year, 1848. Were we both alike welcomed? I have no reason to think I was not welcomed at the time of my coming, by the small circle by whom I was expected.

But how with Spiritualism? Most of the religions of the world have been founded upon the doctrines or teachings of their martyred promoters. And Spiritualism has been the "target" for all manner of missile and projectile charged with invective and opprobrium ever since it came to greet our world. This none can gainsay. Even between the lids of the Bible has misrepresentation coiled itself. In the large embellished edition of Bibles have been placed the different religious denominations of the civilized world. I have not one of these Bibles at hand, but have read, ere now, in one of them a brief description of the Spiritualists' religion which ran about like this. This I copy from a book entitled "The Religious Denominations of the World":

"Among the innumerable follies, of which Spiritualists have been guilty, the greatest is following the advice of free-lover, libertines and low spirits, in refusing to disfellowship the persistently vicious, when it

is a notorious fact that many mediums are practicing the most detestable trickery, deceit, fraud and falsehood. That leading teachers, noted mediums, and popular speakers, have deserted companions, obtained divorces, gone off with affinities, or practiced *promiscuous intercourse*, to get spiritual elements, or to impart vital magnetism for the cure of diseases. Hundreds of families have been broken up, and many affectionate wives deserted by affinity seeking husbands; many once devoted wives have been seduced and left their husbands and tender, helpless children, to follow some higher attraction; many well disposed but simple-minded girls have been deluded by affinity notions, and led off by affinity hunters, to be deserted in a few months, with blasted reputations, or led to deeds still more dark and criminal to hide their shame." This parallels closely what is in this Bible, only in the Bible the conclusion was something like this: "Within the last few years the number of Spiritualists have greatly increased."

Now what are we to make of this. I do not pretend to say, but this may be true. But my friends this is a great misrepresentation, because it only gives to the world the dark side of the picture. Suppose an inhabitant of another planet were to come here for the purpose of obtaining a description of this world's people, their character and disposition, in fine our conditions in every detail, for the purpose of enlightening the people of his home planet, and should refuse to note anything but the deeds of crime and all the immoral conduct existing with us. Would that be fair to our world? Would he be honest to his trust, and would he be dealing fair with his own people. Would not both world's

have reason to protest? Well this parallels the situation between our world and the world of Spirit pretty closely, were the whole matter left entirely with our friends, the enemy, the Christian Church. Why is this so? Why would not the Christian Church have seized upon this opportunity of endorsing Spiritualism at its inception, thus putting their religion upon a sure foundation, where they could have furnished their poor hungry flock with palpable food, instead of expecting them to thrive and grow on intangible faith. The truth is the church was at first profoundly interested, but when it discovered that those they had preached in Hell could communicate back, and those they had preached in Heaven could communicate back, and in fact all could communicate back to friends in earth-life: they decided that this knowledge would be inimical to their plans and purposes of evangelizing the world, so they would put their feet upon it and stamp it out.

But the plans of the Spirit world were laid; the time was ripe for this revealment. Free America had been instituted; the instruments of Inquisitorial torture had had their day.

Spiritualism made its advent with its tiny raps which have echoed around the world, and all the power of Hell or the Orthodox Church cannot vanquish it, for it came with the intention of staying.

The truth is dear friends when you undertake to belittle Spiritualism you only belittle yourselves. It is akin to closing your eyes and declaring that you have darkened the sunlight of heaven. This I speak from authority as I expect to prove. Now to show you that Spiritualism will not down, and to show the attitude of

the Mother Church toward it, I quote a clipping from the Secular Press:

CHAPTER III

"1908, Vatican Begins War on Spiritualism. Special Envoy. A Former Church of England Rector, Is To Conduct It Here. Special to the World.

Washington, Dec. 21.

J. Godfrey Raupert, former rector of the Anglican Church of the Octagon at Bath, Eng., has come to Washington, as special envoy of the Pope to combat the growth of Spiritualism in this country. "The position of the Catholic Church is this," he says, "It admits the reality of Spiritualistic phenomena, in fact, it has always admitted their reality. But the church denies that it has proven that these are human intelligences, and asserts that there are grave dangers, to faith, to morals, to health of mind and body connected with any attempt by the average man or woman to meddle in the matter. People are led away by the desire to obtain valuable information. Another danger to those who tamper with this subject is with regard to the effect on their mental health. It is certain that these phenomena are obtained by the cultivation of mental passivity and consequently there is danger of abrasion and permanent derangement of mental faculties. It is well known although both spiritualists and scientific investigators are apt to attempt to hide this truth, that the greater number of mediums, degenerate and eventually become insane.—Lastly there is danger to faith that comes from this semi-mysterious subject. On the flimsy

basis of their phenomena, the most that can be said for which is that they scientifically demonstrate the existence of a Spirit world, men have attempted to build up a system of theology with cheap tricks and travesties on miracles, this makes a powerful impression on the ignorant and partly informed, though there is no backing of intelligence and wisdom that compares with that of the average child." This is why the authorities at Rome are so anxious that Catholics should have the correct interpretation of this matter. Thousands are being swept off their feet by the reports of psychic powers current in newspapers and magazines. The attitude of Catholics must be absolutely negative. They must not experiment in any way with this unknown power. It is a real *power*, but at present it would seem at least to the theologian to be the power of the Demon for it denies Christ. I have spent considerable time endeavoring to give you an insight into the character of this hydra headed monster the Mother Church; and do not wish to take up the time farther; only to call attention to the decadence of her power. There was a time when think ye she would have spent her time in this weak way trying to vanquish a foe inimical to her ends and ambition? No, no, she would have instituted her "Inquisition" and all who did not promptly renounce their faith to an enemy like this, and swear fealty to the Mother Church and do penance by paying a goodly sum in coin of the realm, would have been proscribed against and tortured until life was extinct.

Now a few words in regard to what is embodied in this mandate from the Pope. To combat the growth of

Spiritualism. What does he know or care of Spiritualism, except that it antagonizes the Catholic Church.

He acknowledges that it is a real power, and therefore enjoins his benighted adherents to negative it in every possible way. Is this more than she has done with every faith or creed that has had birth since her creation? Just consider what a concession is here made, when he acknowledges that Spiritualism is "a real power." Can he of truth make any such claim of his own old musty fossilized bloodstained religion, founded by brute force and perpetuated by falsehood, and whose hope of perpetuity is vested in keeping his laity in their primeval state of bigotry and ignorance.

My friends the Old Roman Church is destined to fall, as well as all of its progeny which are founded upon error. Because it is the decree of destiny that error is to be overcome, in God's good time, by Demonstrated Truth.

I would not say this, did I not feel certain that I have authority for making this declaration.

If man survives the change called death, and is clothed with a spiritual body invisible to us in the mortal, how could it be possible for us to know that they still live unless there were some means of communication between the two worlds? This is vitally essential; because were it not for this, what would we have? Reason could not except the unreasonable doctrines of creeds founded on a man made book replete with unreasonable writings describing a savage and unreasonable God whose conduct is wholly unreasonable. That there is a way provided is what I now wish to explain.

We all know that people pass this stage of life in

all conceivable conditions; from the stillborn infant to the centenarian, and those who have led good and consistent lives, to those who have been steeped in the darkest conditions of vice and crime. So what would be the rational conclusion in regard to conditions on the Spirit side of life. It is evident to those who have made human nature a study that the worst types of humanity contain some good and the best some traces of evil, and to draw a definite line between the good and the bad is not an easy matter. Now what we learn from Spiritualism is that all classes have an equal opportunity of communicating back to those in earthlife. And the universal law that like attracts like holds true in this case. Now a medium does not signify purity of heart, or that they may average any better than those not in possession of this gift; there may be among them those who are very immoral and to this class as a rule would be attracted a bad class of spirits. There may be many exceptions to this rule in both cases of moral and immoral mediums, but this as a rule from what I have learned is about the condition of things. So when a person gives to the public an opinion on Spiritualism the gamut has a wide range, from darkened souls inhabiting the lowest planes of spirit life: to the white robed angel who tells us of the beauties and joys of their world which transcends our power to comprehend.

When I returned from Lily Dale I supposed my friends and acquaintances would be deeply interested in what I had to show them. But here I found I had another lesson to learn.

I found there was a wider diversity of thought or opinion upon what I called proof of an all important

thing to mankind, than I had anticipated. I found also that those who were willing to believe and seemed to in a weak way, preferred to keep their belief a secret owing to the unpopularity of Spiritualism. I found that popular opinion came nearer to making cowards of us all than does conscience. I found that long-established prejudices are not easily uprooted. In regard to my wife: She, during all of this time that I had been making Spiritualism a study, had regarded it as something bad, and better let alone. This, owing to her early training being strictly orthodox, and she seemed to think it extremely hazardous to change religions. I thought there had been crusades enough in the past, and I would not disturb domestic tranquillity on account of my change of belief, and that she could believe as she pleased; she regarded the slates rather superstitiously, but could not help saying, How much that sounds like your father, it is exactly his expression when he was surprised.

I had a deed in the house signed by my sister, I compared this to the name on the slates, they were as much alike as though she had signed her name twice while here. My wife seemed thoughtful, but said but little. I would occasionally give her something to read without asking an opinion; things ran this way for several years, but it was evident to my mind that her hold on her Christian faith was giving way. One Sunday evening much to my surprise, she brought out a small stand and asked me to put my hands upon it with her, I had never thought of a home circle or of trying to get proof of spirit return at home, but of course, I sat with her at the stand and it was not more than half an hour

before the stand began to move and would answer to questions by raps; this interested us much, and the question was asked which of us were the most mediumistic? The reply came promptly that my wife was, and upon questioning, they told us we would soon get better communication than "raps." Well in process of time my wife developed automatic writing. About this time our daughter, Lorena, died having been sick but four days. She was never strong but was well as usual up to the time of this her last sickness. My wife was strongly attached to her, she was our only daughter and when she died it seemed that this blow was more than my wife could endure; but she then took hold of Spiritualism with renewed interest to see if our Lorena still lived. Within a few weeks from this time clairvoyant vision came to her and almost directly she became claudiant, and she could then talk to our daughter, Rena. This was about four years ago, and we—my wife and I—have been conducting a small Psychical Research Society from that time to the present, and while we have not received the highest phases of manifestation, we have received proof all of these years that death is but a rebirth into a higher expression of life. Our daughter Rena has always met with us at our "seances" which have been held weekly, and has acted as interpreter for her mother with all who might meet with us from the Spirit world, for while my wife can talk to her as easily as with anyone in the mortal, she cannot usually talk with others, and it then has to be transmitted by her. When my wife's hand was first controlled to write, her spirit vision had not yet developed, and the only way we could then tell who was

controlling her, was by the name signed to the message among our first seances for writing. My father made himself known and expressed great surprise at my wife's becoming a Spiritualist for he remembered her as being so very pronounced at all times in her Orthodox faith. My father in life leaned heavily toward Universalism. I asked him if he had any idea what had wrought this change? He said he did not know, but he remembered giving "Sammy" a message, a slate one time, and he thought that might have something to do with it. I told him I thought he had made a very good guess. I then said pa since you speak of the slates you wrote on, can you tell us who wrote on the slates in red, and said, "I hope I am welcome even if uninvited," and signed E. H. Hotchkiss. He said, "Why did you not know who that was? Why, that was Eliphalet. He felt slighted because you did not call for him." Eliphalet Hotchkiss is an uncle of mine, a brother of my father who had been dead about three years, he died in his eighty-seventh year. My father was in his seventy-fifth year when he passed out. Of course I can give only a summary of these communications. What will interest the readers is that which goes to prove that our friends survive the change called death, so will relate a few incidents from memory. I do not wish to use names as most people on this side of life are sensitive in regard to this matter. So will say an acquaintance once sat with us by invitation. She was invited for the purpose of a test; for while we both knew her well we knew nothing of her people only that her father was dead; so we thought that whoever came by her request, that we could not know their names or anything of them, which

could be ascribed to the "subconscious mind of the medium" as some claim. It was a Mrs. X. we will say, who sat with us; we requested "Rena" to find her father and have him come and talk to his daughter. After waiting some fifteen minutes, a man came, my wife said here comes a man and with him a little girl: my wife described the man, which Mrs. X. said was correct. I then asked him to give us his name in full which he did; this Mrs. X. said was correct; my wife then described the little girl who ran about the room but who seemed to be attracted to Mrs. X. My wife asked her to give us her name; she said her name was "Fannie" and this woman was her sister. Mrs. X. seemed nervous and much excited from this, but said this was correct. She had lost a little sister, and this was her name, and after asking her father a few questions and receiving correct answers, she withdrew with the understanding that she would meet with him the next Sunday evening. He promised to be present; well when the time arrived she had grown timid and thought as many do that it might be wrong, so she wished to be excused, and of course was. So my wife and I sat alone as usual. The man came at our next seance as per agreement, we told him the situation, that his daughter was afraid to sit with us; he expressed his regrets at the state the world was in and after a brief conversation I told him what I would like for a test, to have him give us his mother's first name, and his mother-in-law's first name. I took a pencil and wrote them down just as he gave them. The next day we asked Mrs. X. what her grandmother's name was on her father's side. She told us; which was correct. Then her grandmother's

name on her mother's side; she told us, and this was also correct. Now let us wait a moment and give this a rational consideration. Suppose he had failed to have given these names from lack of memory, which we have found is many times the case. Sometimes it seems that the spirit's memory is so deficient that they must have suffered a great loss in making the change; again, at other times, some seem to remember with a clearness equal to many of us in earth life. If this spirit had failed to give these names correctly, it would have been no proof against the claims of Spiritualism; but when he gave them correct, I consider it conclusive proof. I do not see any possible explanation except upon the spiritual hypothesis. I hit upon this plan just there with no particular premeditation. He gave these names, we wrote them as he gave them, we asked Mrs. X. in a way that could not possibly lead her what the names of her grandmothers were, she told us, we looked at the names recorded, and they were as the spirit told. What was my object in getting this test? The great object was the satisfaction it gave us, for we had tried similar things to prove identity sometimes without success, and when we found this test correct, we thought it good to know and good to tell to others. "Rena," our daughter, understood the situation from her first inception into spirit-life, and has taken great pains to prove her identity to us, and has to our entire satisfaction, for many, many times. She has many times told us of things that happened in her childhood and subsequent years which we had fairly forgotten till she brought them to mind. She was in her twenty-first year when she passed over. She has told us many

times that we must have no doubt about the reality of a continued life, and that it is a great improvement upon life on the earth-plane. We have questioned our friends much in regard to their homes, their surroundings, and how they get their clothing, for they always come well appareled; our daughter has come to us attired in many styles of dress, with as many different varieties of fabric. Here is a summary of what they tell us in regard to this: That their houses are created by will power, the same as on earth, only the material in the spirit world is sublimated matter and is wrought into temples and houses by the power of the will by spirit chemists; that their houses and edifices are furnished and embellished similar to ours on earth, only many times they are grander than we can have a conception of; that their clothing and all things needed in cloth, in fact, all we have and many things we do not have, are produced in the same way by those who understand. So you see from what they tell us they live veritably in houses not made with hands.

One time we asked "Rena" if she could not give us a description of her home. She said she could not do that very well; it was beautiful, and she would bring some pictures which might give us some idea of it; the next time she came she brought some large pictures which, with some help, she placed upon a holder, all screened at first; after a short visit she said, "Now I will try and give you some idea of our home." She then removed the screen and the grounds and surroundings were first exhibited. My wife said the grounds were beautifully laid out with ornamental shrubs and trees. Of course I could see nothing, but I was satis-

fied my wife did from her exclamations. First, the grounds, then the side and front elevations; then a number of interior views. My wife said they were beautiful indeed. Rena says her home is with her grandparents at present. This may provoke merriment with many, and such may say, as has many times been said, that these are but the vagaries of a diseased mind or the hallucinations of a moon-struck imagination.

Now let us take a little time and consider just where this type of insanity has its starting-point. We all have a desire to live while we are in health and the world goes well with us. We desire to live if things don't go just to suit us in every detail. We all look upon death as a calamity when in the prime of life, and there seems to be much that we should live for; in fine, death is never a welcome guest unless disease or adversity has bereft us of every hope. Then, here we all agree: that we desire to live. Here, again, we agree: we know that at the longest, whether the world goes well or ill, we make our exit from this life in a brief space of time, with all of its joys and sorrows. To this we all agree. Then let us see if we cannot agree a few steps farther; we all desire a future life; each and every individual would be glad of a future life if he could be assured that with it would be happiness. Now there are no exceptions between us up to this point. Then suppose a friend tells you that he has had proof that there can be held intercourse with the denizens of the spirit world; that you are not obliged to take his word alone for it, but that they are yet alive and can be heard from, and if you will turn

aside with him for a few steps you can get proof that this is true. It would look like downright bigotry unless there were some adequate reason why you could not, to refuse to follow a friend to witness what he thought a proof of as important a thing as this, would it not? Your reply is, It certainly would. You follow this friend and witness an independent slate-writing; you critically examine the conditions under which it is done, and you are certain that fraud was precluded; you could hear the writing, and names were signed by those whom you knew in this life and know of their demise; you witness this and you are astonished.

Then suppose this same friend tells you that by going ten rods farther with him you can see certain of your friends who have lived and died, yet still they can appear in a temporary form for a short time and can talk to you. You would, any of you, go ten rods to see so wonderful a thing as this, would you not? I certainly would, and so you all say; then we are still at unity, and none of us moon-struck as we can discover yet. Suppose, then, you go with him, and a friend that you knew well in earth-life appeared to you in a temporary materialized body and tells you things that proves his identity to a degree that is unmistakable to you. You can clearly recognize the form and features, that he is tangible to the sense of touch and sight; he is clothed with apparel similar to ours, and he tells you that he has a permanent existence in the realm of spirit that is as solid and substantial to him as this world is to us; and after telling you all of this and much more, you then see the form dematerialize,

or become invisible. Now, after witnessing all of this, would it be fair to call you moon-struck if you were to believe, from this evidence, after seeing it repeated and all chance for fraud eliminated, that we survive the change called death, and that through "Mediums" there can be communion held between this world and the world of spirits?

These phenomena here described of course we do not expect you will all find so close at hand, but that they do occur, thousands can testify, and whether you go ten rods or a thousand miles could make no difference with the facts; nor could going a long distance make any difference with the question of being "moon-struck." Christians by the million go from all parts of the world to the "Holy Land" to see where Christ "walked on the water." Are they "moon-struck"?

CHAPTER IV

Some charges against "Modern Spiritualism" by our friends "the enemy": First, the great charge is, that we do not believe in God the Father or in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, and salvation by blood atonement. I have discussed this question all I care to. As the mind of man expands by knowledge, his conceptions of God must proportionately expand, and we do not deem it wise to bestow faith and worship upon this Triune Deity which is mathematically an "ad absurdum," when to this is added a thousand and one things that Reason must reject and Truth cannot accept. We do not deny—we believe in—the existence

of a Supreme Infinite Intelligence or Oversoul, of which we and all expressions of life are a part. But the God of the Jews' Bible, and his Son of the Christians', is too circumscribed and the record is too bad for Spiritualism to accept, only in the particulars that have been pointed out. If we hold communion with the spirit world, is it not incumbent upon us to believe what they tell us, especially when they tell us that which accords to the best conceptions of human reason and justice?

Have Spiritualists a creed? I will copy some from a book, "The Religious Denominations of the World," which, in the main, according to what our "arisen" friends tell us, is correct, although the book bears the date 1870; so you see our young religion was much younger then than now. Truth does not change, but our knowledge and conceptions of truth may broaden according to the law of progress and unfoldment, and there has been much learned since this which I copy was indited: "Spiritualism is a form of religion which existed from antiquity (carefully note this), but as a sect Spiritualists are the youngest of the existing denominations. The first representatives of it resided in Rochester, New York, who, about the year 1848, began to attract the attention of the public by declaring that they held communications with departed spirits by means of rapping on tables, knocking on the walls, and other mysterious and unaccountable noises.

"So remarkable a phenomenon at once excited general attention, and several parties were formed in reference to the subject, some asserting the genuineness of the matter, others contending that the whole was an

imposture, and that no communication had taken place or possibly could take place between the living and the dead. Notwithstanding the opposition which was arrayed against Spiritualism, facts continued to accumulate, and experiments were made which seemed to stagger the belief of the most incredulous, and made it very difficult for those who condemned Spiritualism as an imposition to account for them.

“The great principle of Spiritualism is, that the spirits of the departed, who are no longer ‘in the form,’ can and do hold intelligent and sensible intercourse with those still living; and that they accomplish this result in various ways, by raps on tables, by messages, by moving material objects about, by prophecies, by writing and speaking unknown tongues, by spiritual shocks and touches of the person, by spiritual melodies, and by the visible appearance of spirits to the living.

“Within the last sixteen years thousands of persons have been thus used as mediums of communication with the spirits of the departed. Some are made to see and describe spirits, others are controlled to write out communications, often giving test facts unknown to the medium, and sometimes written in phonography, Greek, Latin, or some language not understood by anyone present. In the presence of some mediums tables, chairs, and other articles are moved, and sometimes raised and carried about the room, by some invisible means. Bells are rung, drums are beaten, horns blown, guitars, dulcimers, banjos, tambourines, violins, accordeons and pianos are played upon by invisible operators. Impressional and inspirational mediums have had *positive demonstrations* of spirit influence; and

hundreds of thousands have had tests which have fully convinced them of the possibility of communicating with departed friends and relatives.

"The majority of Spiritualists contend that these manifestations are not confined to the present or recent times, but that they have existed in all ages, though their real nature was unsuspected and unknown. Of this kind, they contend, were the revelations of God to Moses on Mount Sinai, those made to Isaiah and the other Hebrew prophets, the appearance of angels at the sepulchre of Christ, and various other events in the Scriptures.

"The instruments by means of which communications are alleged to take place between spirits and the living are called *media*. These media are of various kinds—*writing* media, who write while in a state of trance, and whose hands are entirely under control by the spirits; *speaking* media, who, while in a state of trance, speak while under the influence of spirits; *seeing* media, whose development is so high and perfect that they can see spirits with their physical sight; *discerning* media, who, by placing a sealed letter on top of their heads, or on the palms of their hands, can read the contents; *normal* media, who speak in a natural state, but are under the influence of a temporary inspiration. Some media are public, others are private; and media of both kinds possess different degrees of excellence and power.

"Spiritualists also contend that spirits are themselves possessed of different degrees of capability to communicate with those in 'the mortal' or who are still alive and in the body. Before a spirit can read,

or communicate through the alphabet, it must possess the necessary acquaintance with letters. A spirit which left the body without being able to read, and without any acquaintance with science, cannot make communications which involve scientific knowledge.

"It is also alleged that the medium through which spirits communicate is a certain fluid in the atmosphere which is more subtle than ether; hence the state of the weather has an important bearing on their communications. In damp, rainy or dreary weather, when the atmosphere is heavy, they are restricted in their operations, because of the deficiency of this mysterious fluid. By the use of these means, Spiritualists have arrived at the adoption of the following doctrinal opinions, which they regard as their system of belief:

"They believe in the existence of a Supreme Being. They believe that all the spirits who now exist in the 'spirit world' once existed in connection with a physical body. That the spirit world is composed of a great number of spheres, each one of which is divided and subdivided into a number of minor spheres, whose variety is equal to the variety of individuals which exist among men on earth. That the first sphere into which the spirit passes when it leaves the body is in many respects the counterpart of their condition here, and advanced but a single degree beyond their character and condition here. That the spirits of higher spheres can read the thoughts of all those spirits which belong to lower spheres. That the spirit of man is immortal; and that the nature of the sphere into which a man enters in the other world depends upon his character when he dies. If his character and feelings are

base, he will enter into a base sphere. That for every injury inflicted on others, the spirit shall be punished by the suffering of mental tortures proportioned to the degree of his crime.

“Spiritualists also hold that the natural tendency of spirits in the future world is one of constant progression from lower to higher spheres, and that every man’s moral status at death is the starting point from which he enters the future state.

“As to infants, they think that, on entering the world of spirits, they are taken in charge by developed matrons, who educate them, and gradually introduce them into higher circles, and continue their care until they become adults. This is done unless in the meantime the mother of the child arrives in the spirit world; in which case, if she be fit to enter the same sphere, the child will be entrusted to her custody; if not, it will be retained in the care of those who are more fit for the responsibility.”

Although this was written nearly forty years ago—and, I should judge, that the compiler was not a believer, or at most that he only held this new religion tentatively—yet the doctrines or teaching are virtually the same as our “arisen friends” tell us to-day. Is this an invented creed by incarnate man, with a view of building up a new religion to compete with the other religions of the world; to butt in and establish a new priesthood, and proselyte the world for followers, and finally reap a golden harvest? If this were so, this new religion called Spiritualism is conspicuous as a failure.

My dear friends, what interest could I have in at-

tempting this task of giving this book to the world if I did not feel 'twere true? I am at work on the wrong side of this proposition to gain notoriety; also the wrong side if it were a question of revenue with me. If it were revenue, it is my belief that a book written in ridicule of Spiritualism, and to hold the whole thing in derision with some glowing accounts of fraud exposures, there would be ten such books sold to one giving an impartial account of the facts of the "seance room" and what is told us purporting to come from those who have crossed the "great divide." Are we deceived? If we are, who is doing it? Is it the "Devil" that is producing all of this phenomena called spiritual, and telling us all of these things about a fictitious spirit world, that he can hiss in our faces after he has gotten us permanently landed in hell? Is this Devil a greater power than the power called God? You all say emphatically, "No." Then how could all of this tremendous evil be rationally ascribed to any other than God himself, if he permits this "evil power" to work such devastation as this, and, when everlastingly too late, inform us that this is a part of his great plan? What a travesty upon Reason!

Who would wish that Spiritualism were not true? What can there be objectionable about it? The only thing that I can see is that it threatens the old established religions; and this, of course, the theologian does not wish; but why? Because he does not want his long established occupation disturbed. I admit, some might suffer temporarily by such a change, but is this any reason? I should say not. There were some who thought they were made to suffer by the abolition of

slavery in our land, but was that a reason for its continuation? I should say not. I have never yet known or heard of an intelligent person who set himself to investigating Spiritualism impartially for the purpose of determining the truth, who has ever declared against it; there may be such cases, but I have never heard of one.

Who are they that declare against it? Invariably those who know nothing of it, or those whose worldly interests, from their viewpoint, admonish them against it. Should things like this block the wheels of progress, and when earth's hungry children ask for bread shall we give them a stone?

The theologian says, Read your Bible and keep your eyes upon the Cross of Christ. This is a hard proposition, because there is so much contradiction to it, which I have pointed out in Part I, that to believe one part makes you disbelieve some other—and there you are. But you will remember I told you there were priceless gems in the Old Book, because they withstand the wear and tear of time and prove that what we call Modern Spiritualism was modern in the time of Paul, and in the day of the woman of En-dor, and so on back till time is lost in antiquity. Now, when Paul says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap." Here St. Paul strikes the keynote of Spiritualism which thunders down the ages. This will withstand the ravages of bigotry and superstition. This parallels this quotation from the religions of the world, and also parallels what our Arisen Friends in modern time have reiterated for sixty-one years, from all parts of the

civilized world. Then, again, where he speaks, "Concerning Spiritual gifts" (mediumship), he parallels Spiritualism again so unmistakably that "the wayfaring man though not very highly educated need not err therein." But what makes this hard on the theologian, it cuts the ground right from under the feet of "Blood Atonement."

Another charge against Spiritualism is that the only means by which the spirit world can be reached is through this class called "mediums." These claim they will have none of it, unless their friends from the other world can communicate to them direct, and tell them the things they would like to know. Of course, if things had been arranged this way, the Bible as it stands would be void, and all the different creeds founded thereon, and all of the various opinions arrayed against them; all of the sanguinary strife that has crimsoned the world with blood; all persecutions and inquisitions; in fine, the whole black record, would not need have been enacted or need have been recorded.

If all in the past ages who have crossed death's river had still been visible to mortal eye and free to exchange thought and show to those in the flesh the baneful consequences of wrongdoing, and the advantage gained by good conduct, it certainly looks to the finite mind that, had this been so from the beginning, a vast amount of suffering would have been avoided. But this charge applies, in every respect, as well to the Christian as to the Spiritualist, and even more, because failure to believe with the Christian is fraught with more serious consequences than with the Spiritualist. What a sea of speculation this carried out in

all its details would finally lead to! We could make it appear as well that the Infinite had gone wrong in every department of his work. This world of ours is a hard proposition, such might contend, to wrestle with for an existence and could be greatly improved *ad infinitum*; finally, God has shown himself incapable in every particular, and creation is a failure.

My friends, we must take this world just as it is; this is all the world that has been given us; we must accept it with the conditions as they are. The achievements of man have been great, but he has had to back up and change his plans a great many times before he has brought his work to final success; and what we have lost by not knowing certain things ages before cannot enter into this question. We must try all things and hold fast to that which is good. This objection to Spiritualism is a flimsy one, and if all were of this class it would still be barred; but, thanks to the great and Divine plan, mankind is not all of this class. But to this class I would say: That while you may not be able to have your spirit friends just as visible and tangible as you may desire at all times, yet in almost every family there will be one or more that by sitting for development can get some phase of manifestation which will lead you, if patient and persevering, into a knowledge of this great truth.

I remember reading from the pen of a prominent Spiritualist and medium that he had lent assistance to many for developing mediumship, and had never met with but one who did not have some degree of this power lying latent. The charge against Spiritualism as being of Satan is too flimsy to take up farther

time. Here is a thing I wish to speak of in this connection: I once read from the pen of one who claims to be a Spiritualist, and while admitting the truth of the claims that we could commune with those called dead, yet it was wrong, and very wrong, to do it, for this reason: that it retards the progress of those we call back to earth, and in this way do them great harm by keeping them fettered to earthly conditions. I thought this irrational, and noted it to ask our friends if this were true. Their reply in substance was this: "If a child ask you a question, would it retard your progress to give an answer? If our time were all taken up with our earth-friends there might be some truth in this, but, as it is, 'tis only recreation and a pleasure to return for a short visit with friends on earth to let them know that we still live."

Some also claim that Spiritualists are prying into that that God never intended they should, and a great sin is being committed against the Almighty thereby. This is the same old thing for which Bruno was burned to the stake, for advocating the rotundity of the earth and its revolution upon its axis. And ministers of the Gospel can and do give interesting lectures upon astronomy; and no doubt, in the future, matters will be adjusted so they will be demonstrating a future life based upon the facts of Modern Spiritualism. But at present, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." God, dear reader, has made our world fireproof and does not care how much his children play with the match-box.

What are we justified in believing? Doubt breeds doubt. Belief breeds belief. Had the two religions,

Spiritualism and, we will say, the Roman Church—this is the oldest and has the largest following—could it have been that these both came to us at the same time, say, at the time of the advent of Modern Spiritualism—this church with its Bible and its plea for faith, Spiritualism with its proof and teachings—which, think you, would win out, both placed upon their merits? The Roman religion would soon sink into “innocuous desuetude” and Spiritualism would spread abroad in the land. Why? Because the former could not appeal to reason, the latter would. The former could not offer one syllable of proof, only faith, and this founded upon the flimsy pretense of revelation, and this wholly irrational. The latter does not ask you to believe one claim that cannot be demonstrated or proved.

Were Spiritualism universally understood and believed throughout the civilized world, would mankind be injured thereby? Would business become stagnated and enterprise lose its fascination? Would our almshouses become overcrowded, and would we need to multiply our State prisons and our machinery for executing the death penalty?

Would there need be less brain employed in exploiting the natural resources of the world or for international improvement? I tell you, No. But the animal propensity in man to grasp and hold, to corner markets, and to monopolize the necessities of life by fixing prices and manipulating finances so that he may boast his hundreds of millions, while thousands are suffering thereby—this kind of occupation, I claim, would lose its charm. And why? Because our “arisen

friends" would tell them this kind of life was not conducive to happiness in the next world; that it is but the carrying out of the baser passions of their nature, and their better natures are blighted and dwarfed thereby, and the faculties that have been cultivated in this brief, uncertain span of life can be of no value in the next, so you arrive in the next world with but one faculty developed, "greed"; and this is of no value, and your better nature is stultified and dwarfed, and you will have to expiate the consequences of a misspent life.

The teachings of Spiritualism may tend toward "Socialism." With me the great bar to socialism is the disposition of so great a proportion of our population to besottedness, to settling themselves as barnacles upon honest labor for support and spending their time in saloons and places of bad repute, with this for their "creed": "The world owes me a living." The world owes you nothing unless you have earned it. But were true wisdom injected into our social fabric, which, I believe, is embodied in the teachings of Modern Spiritualism, this thing called socialism would in time take its place incidentally, with no particular disruption to our social or civic institutions.

My argument is closed; there are volumes that might be said, but I must forbear.

The remainder of my work will now be that of placing before you such things as I have read or heard that have been of deep interest to me, and therefore premise they may interest you, reserving the privilege of a casual comment.

These selections will be given promiscuously. I will

aim to give you selections embracing the various phases of spirit manifestation.

CHAPTER V

MOTHER'S FIRST EXPERIENCE

Burnham, N. Y., Jan. 7, 1909.

Editor *Sunflower*: The following poem was given me by my mother, Hannah Morse, who passed out Dec. 4, 1907, after an illness of about four weeks. Up to the time of her last illness, she was, and always had been, a most radical aggressive orthodox, and it was a matter of disputation between us, often extending into unpleasantness, I being a Spiritualist.

However, she sent for me when she was taken sick and requested me to remain until the last, as she "knew she was going to die." A few days after I had been there the "Ladies' Aid," headed by the minister's wife, called en masse, after their hours of session, to condole, sympathize and pray for her, announcing that the minister would be there soon to assist in prayer. My mother greeted them with "fierce" cordiality—if you know what that means—and refused both them and the minister the privilege, saying she was as well prepared to go as they or the minister, and, furthermore, she did not wish him to speak over her dead body; that "Mrs. Clara Watson was going to perform that act." Everyone was astounded, no one more so than I. The ladies of the Aid brought their visit to an abrupt close, each one remembering some

home duty that must be performed, took their departure and never called again.

After they had gone, my mother told me: "Strange things have been happening to me all the fall. My mother—your grandmother—came to me often, was with me at times every day, 'doing something' over my head. Her first coming was several weeks ago. I was lying down with my little shawl over my head and face. I was nearly asleep when I heard soft, gentle footsteps coming into the room. I felt the presence of someone close beside me, and the shawl raised from off my face. I opened my eyes, but the shawl had not been removed. I raised up, and there stood your grandmother. We had a long talk and she told me I was coming to her soon. I have seen the girls and Eddie" (meaning my two sisters and brother, who passed out several years ago). "They come to me often now, so do many of my old schoolmates, and one day my teacher came, bringing me an apple from the old tree that stood in the schoolhouse yard. It tasted good, too—a great large red one. We don't have any like it now. I haven't seen your father yet, but he will come, they tell me."

My mother talked with me after that fearlessly and frankly about her going, making little gifts here and there, charging me over and over again to be kind to my poor epileptic brother, whom she was leaving behind. She wanted to hold my hand constantly when I was in her room.

In the afternoon of Dec. 3, about five o'clock, she looked up and suddenly exclaimed: "The girls are here again, and here comes Asa" (meaning my father).

Such a happy, pleased expression came over her face, she fell into a quietude of thought and was silent for some time. At last I spoke, saying, "It is time for your medicine." She looked up and replied, "May, it is of no use, but I will take it, if you want me to. It will do no good." Those were her last words. She closed her eyes and slept until four o'clock the next morning, when her spirit left her body.

She has long since promised to write me her experience upon her first going over. I got it the other day, and am more pleased with it than anything else I ever got through my hand. Dr. Henderson, of Lily Dale, treated her in her last illness, and all the home people of Lily Dale are familiar with the occurrence—her antagonism to Spiritualism, and the "change of heart" in her last hours. She had a Spiritualist funeral, or "christening" into the higher life. Mrs. Clara Watson, of Jamestown, N. Y., spoke over the remains. Mrs. Maggie Wildrick sang "Face to Face," and Mrs. Grace Champlin played the piano. Both the latter ladies are from Lily Dale.

(Signed) MRS. THOMAS BURKE.

THE POEM

Passed I into sleep unconscious
 Of all sorrow, grief and pain—
 Sensing nothing, feeling nothing,
 Till I oped my eyes again

On a fairer world and brighter,
 Filled with beauties never guessed—

Rippling streams, whose gentle murmurs
Lulled my spirit into rest.

Undulating waves of music
Floated on the perfumed air;
Vaguely I began to wonder,
Where am I? Oh, where; oh, where?

Memory then began her weaving
Like a tireless busy loom,
And I listened for your footsteps,
As you passed from room to room.

But the sound of rippling waters
And the song of unseen birds—
Mingling with some far-off music—
Was the only sound I heard.

Nearer on it came, and nearer,
Till it reached a loud acclaim—
Ponderous, joyful notes of gladness,
Beating out our loved one's name.

Then a feeling—that I name not—
O'er my weakened senses crept,
Filling me with sweet contentment,
Like a weary child I slept.

When I woke 'twas on a vision
That I gazed, so fair, so mild,
That I scarce was sure I knew her—
Your dear sister, my dear child,

That had left us in the blossom
Of her budding motherhood,
Years ago; and smiling sweetly
There before me Hattie stood.

Oh! the bliss of that one moment!
Oh! the joy; for well I knew
That death's dark and dreaded river,
Somehow, I had forded through,

All unconscious of the passage
As I crossed the dark abyss,
As I journeyed down the valley
Whose drear shadows lead to bliss.

Then from out the flowers and foliage
Other spirits seemed to glide—
Your father, brother, sister Eva—
All were standing by my side.

I was weak, so weak, but happy,
And I tried to speak—in vain—
Tears of love and joy were falling
From my eyes like summer rain.

Your father took and placed me gently
In a soft-reclining chair,
And I gazed around in rapture—
Flowers, flowers everywhere.

Loving hands caressed me fondly,
Loving lips were pressed to mine

Loving eyes were shining brightly
With a happiness divine.

'And they told me of the wondrous
Working of your angel band—
How they reached my understanding
By my holding of your hand.

Then my mind went back to earth-life,
And I longed for you to know
That I was supremely happy,
That my soul was all aglow.

With a love so pure, so holy—
Not a grief, and not one pain—
Only in my heart a longing
To come back to you again,

Just to tell you I was happy,
That you must not grieve and mourn,
I was free from earth-life's shackles
Which I had so lately worn;

'And that you must bear up bravely
With the burden I had cast
As a heritage of sorrow
In your generous heart at last.

But I could not come for weakness,
Helpless as a child newborn;
And they told me I must foster
All my strength for Christening morn.

Yes, I came, and saw the wrinkled
Face of mine, all cedar-crowned,
Saw you place the red carnation
On my breast, your eyes tear-drowned.

Saw the old form dressed in satin,
White it was, all trimmed in lace,
Heard the music, and the singing,
“We shall meet—yes—face to face.”

Heard the message that was spoken
O'er my form, so cold and still—
Death is life, and change's progression;
Love is law, and nature's will.

Then they took me back to heaven,
Tended me with kindest care;
I learned the law of love and labor,
Joining with the workers there,

That I might come back to earth-life,
When I found an open door,
Bringing messages of kindness,
Teaching much—and learning more;

For the law of love and labor
Is unselfish deeds of love,
Which react upon the giver,
Bringing blessings from above.

I am with you very often,
Watching o'er you night and day,

Giving you divine ambition,
Hearing every word you say.

So, have patience, child, and kindness,
Being faithful to your trust.
It will strengthen and protect you
When you die, as die you must.

I am passing through the stages,
As the law of love demands,
Going onward, ever upward,
Toiling with both heart and hands.

Soon I'll reach the fair Arcadia
Where the brightest angels dwell—
Where my heart, with love's pure essence,
Echoes back my soul's "All's well."

And I'll meet you in the morning
Of the dawn of life's pure day,
On the shore of life's supernal,
When the mists have rolled away.

—Through the hand of Mrs. Thomas Burke, Burnham, N. Y. (Signed "Ma.")

You admit this poem is beautiful, but you say you don't believe anything in the source from which it is purported to have come. This is nothing new; thousands have made similar denunciations, but have changed their minds.

As one has expressed it, "Many have went to scoff,

but have remained to pray." Our decarnate friends tell us, "That pursuits we have had a passion for in this life, but have been denied by adverse circumstances while here, we are free take up there and are furnished with Instructors, and all the necessary spirit material and implements, with beautiful temples for instruction, where you may commence at the A B C of your desired pursuit, and may pass from grade to grade, until you have reached a stage of attainment not dreamed of by mortals." Is not this "a consummation devoutly to be wished" by the poor drudge who daily plods the treadmill of care, with no hope of rest but the grave?

They also tell us we are free to follow scientific pursuits or continue them that we may have been engaged in while here—with opportunities broadened and better means at hand for prosecuting said pursuits. That art and literature may be still pursued by those who had a taste in that direction while here, and so on, and on.

Here is a thing that carried proof to my mind of this, the time I was at Lily Dale. I met a lady medium by the name of Mina Seymour, who said she was "*en rapport*" with Robert Burns, and he had transmitted to her from time to time poetry sufficient for a volume of 320 pages in Scotch. This interested me, and I asked her many questions. I asked her if she had a taste for poetry and wrote any before becoming acquainted with Mr. Burns. She said, No, no thought of it whatever; she allowed she liked poetry very well, but no taste whatever for Scotch poetry. She told me about her clairvoyant vision and of her being clairaudiant—things I did not then know much about. I asked her how he transmitted his poetry to her. She said

sometimes in writing which appeared to her clairvoyant vision, or claraudiantly, and she wrote it as he gave it. I found her very interesting and bought one of her books. She called my attention to a certain thing within the book that I wish to call your attention to. It is in answer to the stereotyped cry of "fraud" and "I don't believe it."

Robert thought he would do the best he could to exonerate his dear medium from this charge, and told her in a short poem to go to Pierre Keeler's, and he would give her a message in Scotch poetry on sealed slates, which appears in her book, lithographed with a sprig of forget-me-nots.

I will give you this invitation desiring her to go to Keeler. Also what appeared on the slates. This conversation took place directly after my engagement with Keeler, which lent additional proof to the claims of Spiritualism.

TO MY LADY

To Keeler's gae, i' the mornin',
 Your request I quick will grant;
 The evidence asked for,
 Ye never mair will want.
 A message on the slates ye'll get,
 Scotch rhymes Rob Burns will gie;
 A wee bit braw, love letter,
 Lady, ye'll get frae me.

Min' na the clishmaclaver
 Or the doubting skeptic, nae,
 I'll tak' ye to dear auld Scotland,
 To my kintra ye will gae.

We'll leave the sullen dames ahint,
 They'll dit their mouths, they will;
 I'll sen their way a lyddite shell,
 The hizzies will get their fill.

(Slate-writing by P. L. O. A. Keeler.)

I'll wi' thee be, while the dew
 In siller bells hings on the tree
 Or while the burmins waves o' blue
 Run wimplin' to the uroin sea;
 I'll wi' thee be while the gawin mild
 Its crimson fringe spreads on the lea;
 While blooms the heather in the wild,
 Oh, I will ever wi' thee be!

I'll guide thee while the lintel sings
 His songs o' love on whinny brae;
 I'll guide thee while the crystal springs
 Glint in the gow'den gleams o' day;
 I'll guide thee while there's light above,
 And stars to stud the breast o' sky;
 I'll guide thee till life's day is done,
 And bless thee when thee comes on high.

ROBERT BURNS.

It will be remembered that Robert Burns in his day was no favorite with the dispensers of the Gospel; and he was regarded by them as a lost soul because of his radical views, which were reflected in his poetry. He has been on the other side now over a hundred years, and has not been converted to the Christian religion

yet, from the tone of his spirit poetry. I will give in part a supramundane production of his, entitled

FATHER SNIFFLE'S CONFESSION

O Lord! here in thy holy church,
 With prayer I come to thee;
 Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
 Three in one, and one in three.
 Almighty is thy power, O God!
 Thy penetrating eye dost see,
 And know, my soul with grief is sore
 From sin. God! set me free!
 Ghaist—'Tis true, in this confessional,
 O man, ye've often been afore.

When my weak soul was wrecked with pain
 And I a coward shook with fear;
 With secrets dark, I dare not tell
 E'en then, I felt your presence near,
 The dark-winged messenger of sin.
 Temptation—through it we fall;
 The wily snake that smiled on Eve,
 O God you viewed it all.
 Ghaist—is there no surcease from hypocrisy
 Your sins—man are nae small.

Temptation does me oft beguile,
 She sets her cunning snare;
 With bewitching Circe-like smile
 Her traps are everywhere.
 Tho' priest I am, of woman born
 Her weak points I inherit,

My reputation is good, O God
 (But you know what I merit)
 Ghaist—and be it this or be it that
 The crown of thorns, ye'll wear it.

On thee, O Lord! I loudly call,
 Save me from sin's fell snare,
 Sin and Temptation, twins from Hell!
 I meet them everywhere.
 O God! in this confessional,
 I humbly bend the knee;
 I consecrate my life, O God!
 Consecrate it to thee.
 Ghaist—O Father, Son (I am the ghaist)—
 A holy trinity.

O Holy Mother! Mary, virgin,
 The cross I make to thee;
 In meekness, Holy Mother,
 I humbly bend the knee.
 Bear with my sins, O Mother mine!
 List, Mother, while I pray:
 The load is greater than I can bear,
 I will confess to-day.
 Ghaist—Science now sees with Godlike eye—
 Turn on the Cathode ray!

O God! 'tis here that erring souls
 Confess so oft to me
 The sins they've done from day to day;
 'Tis here I take the pardoning fee,
 A servant to your holy law.

The wafer on their lips I place;
 Ecclesiastical polity—a right from God—
 It saved the sinner from disgrace—
 Ghaist—the law and rites of gods and priests
 To Almighty man we trace.

Like ithers, I'll take bread and wine
 (I'll feast while others fast);
 With holy water I'll wet my brow,
 By this the sinner's blest;
 Here in thy holy temple, O God!
 Men kneel, the cross they kiss;
 Faith gives them holy confidence,
 Supernal grace and bliss.
 Ghaist—the bliss o' ignorance ye ken—
 Losh! my opinion this.

Great God, infallible I am to them,
 Infallible you are to me;
 A suppliant, I kneel and sue for grace—
 'Tis mercy, God, I ask of thee.
 Oh! give me Cyril's power, O God!
 That I may dethrone wrong;
 Oh! concentrate your legions, God,
 And make your fortress strong—
 Ghaist—but nae sae strong but what 'twill fall—
 Dissenters ye're among.

'Tis here girls tell of wayward sins
 And ask to be forgiven;
 'Tis here they tell the old, old tale,
 How poverty and cold has driven

Them out into a cruel world,
 Where bread is hard to get;
 Into sin's whirlpool they are hurled,
 With cunningness sin's traps are set—
 Ghaist—poor weaklings! innocent and blin',
 Food and shelter hard to fin'.

O God! so well I know 'tis true,
 'Twas in an hour like this,
 With cold and hunger in the home,
 Temptation their lips did kiss.
 Life struggles for existence,
 Attraction is a subtle king,
 His treacherous smile revives dead hope,
 Many pleasures he does bring—
 Ghaist—ye ken it weel just hoo they fa'—
 Bocacce has tauld it a'.

The tempter gave them bread and wine;
 They whose purse held not one dime
 Did kneel before Temptation's shrine—
 Sad duty mine, sad duty mine.
 Evil with Argus-eye did worse;
 Lust gave them love, food and wine—
 Ghaist—He who noteth the sparrows fall
 Saw it all—saw it all.

With Love's sweet promise he led them on,
 With glittering gold that lured,
 Into the beautiful palace of sin,
 Into a gilt-edged hell ensnared,
 Want bade them go within.

Thou knowest their souls endured
Much before they fell.

Forgiveness I assured—
Ghaist—poverty with empty maw,
Stops nae for man-made law.

To God's confessional men oft come,
Confess their sins—yea, bold;
You know, O Lord! confession
Will keep them in the fold.

'Tis here the treacherous wife reveals
The dark ways of her life;
Forgiveness asks; she pays me well;
I pass her, as a pure good wife;
The worldly sins of all my flock
I cover as best I can:

Confession and forgiveness,
This is Salvation's plan.

Ghaist—confession—confession, a devilish priestly plan!
Confession—confession, it enslaves the mind of man!

'Tis here the husband comes in prayer,

Repentingly bends the knee;
I intercede with thee, O God!

With a confession to me,
To please an angry God,

He pays a princely fee;
Reveals the crimes of a burdened soul,
Dark-dyed in the blood of his heart—
Virtue's maids he led astray,
He played the villain's part.

They pay the penalty of crime and shame

With ruined character and blackened name.

Ghaist—suicide takes them in his arms,

Croons them to sleep with Death's weird charms.

This is considerable less than half of this poem, but perhaps you will think this sufficient. You may not observe any of the earmarks which stamped his mundane poetry, but here is a span of over a hundred years to be bridged, and this bridge must also span the chasm between the two worlds. Still, the tone of his literature remains unchanged, in regard to his views of scapegoat atonement.

CHAPTER VI

Are we Spiritualists deceived? Am I and my wife deceived, and through ignorance are we trying to deceive the world? Some of our opponents tell us that this phenomena called spiritual is produced through the subconscious mind or second personality; that this second personality, if given an opportunity, will impersonate any individual that the sitter or medium may desire to see from the "supernal," will read the first personality's thoughts, and conversation in this way may be carried on *ad libitum*.

That your second self will array itself for the purpose of deceiving your first self by the hour, this has a worse look than a house divided against itself; this looks as if the very individual was divided against *himself*, and for what purpose God only knows. This

I regard as criminally underrating the wisdom of the Infinite. Of course, we have mirrors in this world made for the purpose of reflecting our personality, and one can stand before one and act like a fool as long as he likes, but he is permitted to know what he is doing all this time. But to believe that a part of me will split loose and become a "you" to the part of me that retains the flesh for the purpose of deceiving the whole of me, is doing more violence to reason than I want done to mine. My wife does not possess as high a degree of power as some; but let me ask the logician of this school, can this second personality move a stand at our request on a carpet with no visible power, no one touching it, or it touching nothing but the carpet it stood upon? This has taken place in our house, and none but my wife and I in the room.

If this were true in regard to second personality, it could cover but a very small part of the phenomena of the "seance room"; and what is the pseudo-philosopher going to do with his big remainder? He may call this fraud and satisfy himself this way, but this is not going to satisfy the world. Fraud-hunting I have no particular fascination for; it is the facts I want, and facts are what I propose to deal in.

Now, in regard to "second personality phenomena," let us see what we would have to premise in this case which I will now describe. By the way, there comes to our seances sometimes many strangers, sometimes more than my wife can number; our daughter Rena is, however, always present, and many times introduces strangers to us, and if they wish to say anything to us, she talks or interprets for them. One time, my

wife said, "Here comes a man; he is rather stout built, of medium height; a good-looking man, and wants to talk." I asked Rena if she could ascertain his name. He introduced himself through her as Franz Vanburgen; that he was an old friend of my wife's grandfather; that they were classmates in a college in Germany and graduated at the same time (my wife's father's people were Germans); and he had been told by him (her grandfather) that he could hold converse with those in the flesh by coming here, and that was why he came (what a funny second personality freak this of itself would be!). Well, he visited at some length and told us he would come again the next Sunday evening, which he did. I cannot recall all that was said, but what I have in mind is, he asked my wife if she would not like to take a trip to Germany with him. I told him I thought that a pretty long journey to take for the first one, and questioned him, if such things were not accompanied with some danger. He said he thought not, but while the "medium" was absent from her body she should not be disturbed in any way, like pricking her with pins or anything of the kind.

I told him she was not very strong, and I did not wish her to take a voyage of this kind if there might be danger of her not returning safely. I asked him how long she would be absent from her body. He said perhaps about an hour. My wife and I proposed a short voyage first, to see how she stood it. Well, we all agreed to have her go with him to New York City and visit the Brooklyn Bridge. He told her to seat herself in an armchair and assume an easy position.

This done, she said he has stepped right up to me and puts his hands on to my head. This was all she said, and immediately she became oblivious to all surroundings. She appeared like one in a profound sleep for about fifteen minutes, which seemed like a much longer time to me and while sitting there, I thought to myself, if she returns all right this time, she will not go to Europe in this way by any of my sanction.

Well, she returned all straight, only much exhausted. I had to help her out of her chair; but she said she had passed through a most wonderful experience; that she found herself in what seemed like a large basket, with Mr. Vanburgen and our daughter and two or three other of her once earth-friends, and went with tremendous speed. And as she passed over the great metropolis, she could hear the din of the city, and then they found themselves landed upon this world-renowned bridge, and observed for a short space of time the busy throng passing over, some one way and some the other, the trolley cars and all. Then they headed their vehicle homeward, and in a short space found herself again in her mortal body. After helping her from her chair, I told her that would do me for that phase of manifestation. Our visitor claimed he knew his business, but that she was not strong enough to practice this very much. Why I speak of this is: How is the second personality hypothesis going to reconcile this to rationality? Did my wife's second personality assume the form of a stranger, give a name that we neither of us had ever heard of as we know, and make this proposition and discourse about it, and finally

agree on a voyage to Brooklyn Bridge? This second personality, then, entrances the first and deceives us in this way? This is a greater strain on credulity than to believe the thing as represented.

I own this is hard to believe by the uninitiated, but through my investigations and studies I am satisfied that this (externalization) is a fact. She has since then went on two or three short journeys. A son of ours lives in Schenectady, perhaps about a hundred and fifty miles from here as the crow flies; and one time some of our spirit relatives and the medium made up to go there and see her son and family. She went, and when she returned she gave a correct description of the house and its interior. She had never been there since he built the house, but when she went there a few months later in person, she said it was precisely the same as it appeared to her in her spirit journey. How is this thing done? I cannot tell. But, "Horatio, there are more things in heaven and earth than you have dreamed of in your philosophy." This is what our ex-carnate friends tell us, "That the spirit, not the body, is the real being, and that this mortal form is the first envelope through which the spirit manifests, and that it is possible for the real being to leave the form for a time, but there is always a connecting link or thread that will extend itself indefinitely around the earth, if need be. But if this thread is severed, the soul is released and death of the body is the result. I have never heard of a death from this cause, but this implies nothing. This thing the hypnotist will tell you. I had read of this in their works before I had a knowledge of Spiritualism. Our spirit friends tell

us they are adepts at hypnotism. Have we any precedent of this kind of phenomena?

Certainly, we have. And I will tell you directly, but let me first speak of one more excursion my wife took while out of the body. She once made an ascent to Heaven, but which heaven it was she did not learn. But she declared, with St. Paul, that she saw things unutterable. And this is what they tell us Paul meant: that things he saw transcended his power to describe; and this is what my wife says.

This is the precedent I was going to speak of: when St. Paul "knew of a young man some fourteen years ago who made a similar ascent." You all know the Scriptural account. The fact is, the churchman is always looking too far back and too far ahead and the eternal and wonderful "now" is overlooked.

Since the time of my change of mind to Spiritualism I have arrested the attention of a few in our little town upon this subject. I do not think it worth while to try to convert a person that is unlearned; if I ever did think so, I have had good reason to change my mind. But there was and is a man in our place that I have held in high esteem as a man of good ability and common sense, and one that I knew was not strongly bound to modern churchanity. One time I told him what I had discovered and what the discovery had led me to believe. I told him my judgment might err and that I would be pleased if he would study along the same lines, and see if the trend of our conclusions would lead so that we could keep in sight of each other. He assented, and I told him what I had come to believe. He said to me, "Do you believe there is such a thing

as hearing from and holding converse with the dead?" I told him I certainly did; while he is not a man given to profanity, but I suppose he thought the stress of the occasion required it, and he said, "Well, by God, I don't believe it."

I told him in substance I had not asked him if he believed, or to believe. But I did ask him if he would take some pains to investigate. I told him people were too much given to measuring others' knowledge with their ignorance, and I would like to have him study the ground over that I had been over up to date and then hand down his opinion. He agreed to this. I showed him the slates and told him the conditions under which I got the writing, and gave him a book to read, with the promise of more. I could see he thought I had been guyed, and I could also define his thoughts that he, without doubt, could clear up a mystery or two for me.

The next year, while Lily Dale camp was in session, he went there without advising me, we suppose, in a measure for the purpose of clearing up some mysteries and making me wise. He found Pierre Keeler doing business at the old stand, but could not get an engagement with him, because he was overcrowded with work; but by good luck he got a chance with another medium for this phase by the name of Fred P. Evens. Among the ones he addressed for a message was a man who had died a few years before, who was well known in our town and was a member of one of the churches and had been a lifelong church worker. Well, during the engagement Mr. Evens said—(it should be remembered that this medium is clairvoyant and could communicate with those who came mentally or by telepathy):

"There is a man here who seems badly unstrung; he is very trembly and cannot write; he gives his name ____." This investigator says the medium did not give the name just exactly correct, but so near that there could be no mistake here, and he knows the medium did not see any of the names he wrote.

Well, he got his slates filled with this mysterious writing, with the names assigned, but no message from this one. He purchased some books from some of the leading authors in the occult and returned home. He then told me where he had been, and what he had seen; his face wore a pleased expression as he related his experience. It was evident he had run against something very different from what he had expected, and before he explained it away he had better take some more time for study. Another thing he found different than he expected, he found a class of people there that impressed him very much by their friendly attitude toward each other, and their high degree of intelligence.

Now, in regard to this one that could not write on the slates. I had before this asked my father about many who had passed over, if he had met them, and how it was with them, and this, and that, just to see what conclusion to arrive at, and amongst the rest I asked him about this one, and he said, "He did not seem to have yet recovered from the shock that the change produced; as the saying goes, he seems to be off his base." He wrote this with no suggestion from us. I consider this of value, but do not wish to force it upon any. This was written through my wife's hand before her clairvoyant vision had developed.

Now, I would ask if second personality is responsi-

ble for all this, why is it we are not conscious of this second self until we are impressed from some cause that there is truth in Spiritualism. My wife and I were both past fifty before we had any knowledge of it, and all of these years this second personality lay perfectly dormant, and at this late day it comes to life or a state of consciousness and monkeys in this way, and for what purpose? I must own this is beyond my power to tell. The truth is, this is a materialistic hatchment to deceive the uninitiated.

Here is an automatic writing through the hand of my wife from Abraham Lincoln. How do we know this? My wife says, "Here comes Abraham Lincoln." She has all confidence it is him, and I have no doubts. Abraham Lincoln has made us a call several times, and I have advised with him in regard to this book; and not him alone, but a number of our great men. They tell us the word great does not have the same significance with them it does with us, and wherever they can reach our plane for the purpose of helping humanity they are pleased to do so. This from A. Lincoln came just recently: "Dear friends, according to my promise, I am here. You must know, as I was your president I have your interest at heart as I did then. I was unexpectedly cut off in the midst of my labors or before I was ready to go. But, my friends, I am doing more, far more for oppressed and suffering humanity than I ever could if I had not been cut down by the assassin's hand. I can tell you this much: the greatest curse to civilized nations is the false religion that is being taught by priests of all churches. The time is coming when priestly rule will be swept from your earth;

then the lion and the lamb will lie down together. Spiritualism has come to set men free from the yoke of worse than slavery: the black cloud of the bigot and creed-bound fanatic. Keep courage, for there is a mighty force on this plane that is watching and impressing your head men to liberate and help earth-bound mortals to better conditions. I will commence here next time. Good-night." I will try and connect this writing with our last "seance." My talk then was more about myself. I will now write on a more wonderful theory—spirit return. If a man die, shall he live again? This is my answer: Yes; for Spiritualism has come to set men free from the thralldom and fetters of false doctrines; Spiritualism is the light that has come at last from out the misty past; the black cloud of superstition is passing away slow but sure. Oh, what efforts the churches are trying to make to overthrow it! But it has come to stay. The almost persuaded ones are halting and waiting, dare not let their thoughts be known for fear of popular opinion; the battle is on, and will be fought out and victory will be proclaimed. I well know how you people feel; be patient and quiet; you need not bow your heads in humility in so urgent a cause as this. I will give you more next time, as you are growing weary. Good-night.

"I will make the right connection from our last seance. What is there more to say than has been said to strengthen in favor of the eternal truth of Spiritualism? I can tell those that seem to have a belief in it to do some thinking for themselves, to read and investigate, that you may convince yourselves, if you

are halting between two opinions; try to choose the most rational, reasonable one, for it will take a load from your doubtful position and Truth will shine out like a luminary in its transcendent splendor and beauty. My friends, you can fill in of your own experience, so your friends and whoever reads your book may be convinced. If you have made the teachings of your book plain, I will say to you, add to your book what you know of the truths of Spiritualism, and I do not think you will need any more of my help. You will correct all my mistakes in writing, and remember, this is somewhat difficult to keep my message correct, as I no longer belong on your side of life. I shall aid and help you. Good-night.

“A. LINCOLN.”

I have given you Mr. Lincoln's writing just as it appeared on the paper. How is it done? When the visitor expresses a wish to write or when invited, my wife is provided with a pencil and writing-tablet; she then becomes semiconscious and her hand begins to write, and I turn the leaves when necessary. The writing is usually a pretty coarse scrawl, and well spread on the paper, and not always easy to read. Mr. Lincoln is radical in his expressions. This is characteristic of him. He was a radical man when with us, as all the world knows.

The writings that have come through my wife's hand would make a small volume. I will promise you one more communication from her hand which is yet to come. This is to be from an old friend of hers. When she was but a girl of sixteen she went some

forty miles from home to teach a district school. This friend was an old teacher, about thirty years of age, and took a friendly interest in her, and she greatly respected him, and he frankly owns, since meeting with us in spirit, that he loved her.

He has come many times; in fact, he was the first person that ever controlled her to write through her hand; and I have seen the pencil write by him without her grasping it; it simply lay between her thumb and forefinger and wrote entirely independent, save to lean against her hand; it was not very legible scrawl, but could be read. He came to our last seance and I asked him if he would like to write a few words for my book? He said he would, but would need time to prepare it, and he would come again in two weeks.

He passed from earth about thirty years ago; he was a single man at the time spoken of, but had a girl in that neighborhood, whom he afterwards married, who guarded him with jealous care. So my wife says.

While we are waiting for my wife's friend, I will give you an account of a materialization seance by this same medium through whom I received the slate-writing P. L. O. A. Keeler. Of late years he has become a materializing medium, as well as independent writing.

What is materialization? "That is the question." It is the highest phase of physical manifestation, and one that the unprincipled juggler is most likely to counterfeit. This is a phase that often staggers the belief of professed Spiritualists, owing to the fact that there is so much said derogatory to it, and also to

frequent accounts of what are called fraud exposures.

I will give you as briefly as possible a summary of what our spirit teachers tell us in regard to the philosophy or chemistry of this wonderful manifestation. We have accounts of it in the Scripture, of Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration, the angel wrestling with Jacob, etc.; so, though called modern, it has precedents from remote antiquity.

The medium through whom this manifestation is produced, needs a small enclosure called a cabinet, in which the medium enters, and where the spirit chemists perform their work. And through their knowledge with correct conditions, excluding the white sunlight and substituting a subdued artificial one, the spirits always dictate what the light should be. When ready, with the medium in the cabinet, usually under strictest conditions. A number of sitters are necessary for good results, which takes the strain in a measure from the medium. The medium is in most cases profoundly entranced. Then the spirit chemists commence their work. They draw from the body of the medium and also from the circle sufficient substance to clothe a spirit with a temporary body, which for a time can appear outside of the cabinet, can talk and walk about and be recognized by friends. Sometimes the form is not very substantial and falls to pieces in the presence of the sitters, or apparently sinks through the floor. Again, the form assumes the solidity of an inhabitant of earth and is as tangible to touch and sight. At such times the medium is much reduced in weight. I have read where the medium was placed upon a scales during the seance, and during a mate-

rialization his weight was diminished by fourteen pounds.

I suppose many will say upon reading this, what a credulous, gullible lot are those Spiritualists? But you will find upon investigation the ones who are the most blatant in their denunciations are those who know nothing about it, and are basing their conclusions upon their ignorance. As W. H. Batch once said: "To argue that he had not seen his brother materialized would be akin to arguing that he himself did not exist, that both were based upon the same evidence."

With these words of introduction, we will proceed with this promised seance, copied from the *Sunflower*:

CHAPTER VII

"SPIRITS RECONCILED AT LAST

"MARGARET FOX AND HER HUSBAND ARE BROUGHT TOGETHER AT SEANCE—BOTH MATERIALIZED.

(Contributed by Dr. Hausmann.)

"March 20, 1909, at Mr. Pierre L. O. A. Keeler's light-seance, I was called by the spirit George Christy, the faithful guide of the medium, to sit with Mr. Keeler in front of the curtain which is drawn across the cabinet, and under another curtain to sit, as it were, in an interior cabinet. On such occasions the seance room is only illuminated by a lantern, with movable slide, regulated by the spirits themselves, according to requirement. Some spirits tolerate more, others less, orange light. The lantern is at the farthest end

of the room, the slide connected by a wire with the interior of the principal cabinet.

"Mr. Keeler was sitting about $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet from my left side, our hands not joined. Many times we converse when spirits are talking with their friends. Some spirits assert that it is easier for them to speak when I am sitting with Mr. K. and often lean heavily on my left shoulder. (On a former occasion General Stonewall Jackson spoke from the floor, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet from my right foot.)

"At this seance a spirit appeared first through the curtain of the cabinet, above our heads, then came out, spread a veil over a lady's head, and turned toward General Floyd King. Not being strong enough yet, this spirit retired into the cabinet to gain more strength. After a few moments she came out and, again, to General King, gave her name, talked with him, and ultimately disappeared at his feet. One of the many spirits who saluted their friends, and had sometimes an extended conversation with them was the famous Arctic explorer, Elisha Kent Kane. He spoke principally with Mr. F. A. Palmer. As Mr. Palmer was again at a seance, where spirits came in materialized form, and I sitting farther away from the cabinet, so that I was not able to see and hear distinctly, I begged him for a report of these manifestations. I did not ask in vain, and received the following letter, whose lucidity speaks for itself:

"DEAR DR. HAUSMANN: It gives me pleasure to comply with your request for a description of a seance held under the auspices of the mediumship of Mr. Pierre

Keeler, of Fairmount St., Washington, D. C., whose mediumistic powers in this line of manifestation are unrivaled. His able and veteran guide, George Christy (the old-time minstrel), in light-seances, and Washington Emmons, who conducts the materialization, always insure the seekers after light with entertaining and convincing proof that the saying of the Master, "Because I live ye shall also live," is true.

"March 20 at a small gathering at Mr. Keeler's, that well-known Arctic explorer, Elisha Kent Kane, appeared, and was identified. He wore a fur cap, ordinary clothing, and was well and substantially developed. I had a slight acquaintance with him, having met him before he entered the other realm. He said he wanted to make a confession to me, concerning his relations to his wife, Margaret Fox-Kane (one of the Fox sisters, pioneers in the development of Modern Spiritualism), whom he married and repudiated at the instigation of his family, who refused to acknowledge her. He said it was a cowardly act, and that, while he had courage enough to brave the rigors of the Arctic region, he was too weak, mean and cowardly to stand by his wife, and that as a consequence he had not seen her since they passed over. That he had always loved her and that he could not be happy and at peace until he met her, asked forgiveness for his base act, and was reconciled. He entreated me to use my influence to bring about a meeting between them.

"I answered, it would afford me pleasure to be of service and at once asked George Christy if he could not get in communication with Mrs. Fox-Kane. He

said her whereabouts was unknown to him, but that through Washington Emmons he would try to trace her and bring her there.

“So much for this phase of the episode. Now for the dénouement:

“March 29th, again a small circle assembled at Mr. Keeler's. During the evening a medium-sized female form, clad in white, came out from one end of the simple cabinet (instead of from the front, as usual) and stood quietly behind the chair of Mr. Albert Hall, who was announcing the names of friends as they appeared. She clearly gave the name of Margaret Fox. I at once stepped forward to meet her, and at the same time Mr. Kane appeared at the other end of the cabinet (Mr. Keeler, entranced, occupying the center behind the curtain).

“I gave Mrs. Kane a word of greeting, expressing my pleasure at her presence, and proceeded to welcome her husband, who grasped my hand and said earnestly, “Is she here?” I said, “Yes, and I am more than glad to be able to bring you together.” Placing my arm over and around his shoulders, I drew him toward the form of his repudiated and deserted wife. Mr. Hall arose as she moved slowly and reluctantly toward us. When we met, I took her hand, placed it in his, put my arms about both their shoulders and drew them together. Feeling deeply the pathos of this scene, I said, “God bless you, and may this reconciliation bring you both much happiness.” They both cordially embraced, kissed each other, and he expressed his delight and gratitude at being at last reunited and entreated her to forgive him for his neglect and desertion. After

a moment they, still embracing, disappeared through the floor, without re-entering the cabinet.

“During a half century of experiences in all phases of mediumship and all forms of spiritual manifestations, with an acquaintance personal and intimate with Home, Slade, Foster, Willis, and a host of others, I do not recall a more pathetic or dramatic incident.

“This is a brief narration of the event, without embellishment, and can be verified by those present.

“The emotions of the circle were deeply stirred and they manifested their approval and appreciation by applause and comment of surprise and delight.

“In closing I desire to express my confidence in the honesty and genuineness of the wonderful manifestations through Mr. Keeler, though why reputable men and women in this field of psychic research require to be vouched for any more than other people, is beyond my comprehension. I have derived great pleasure, comfort and benefit through Mr. Keeler’s mediumship,

“Sincerely yours,

“A. PALMER.

“New Canaan, Conn.’”

“The Progress of Spiritualism,” by Titus Merritt, impresses me as being exceedingly well suited to this place in my book while we are waiting for Mr. Gearmans and one or two others who have promised a contribution.

“This history of the development of religious ideals furnishes no parallel to the progress of Modern Spiritualism, whether we consider its essential nature, the

means employed for its advancement, or the rapidity of its triumphs. The term modern plainly indicates an ancient spiritualism, which is older than the Egyptian obelisk, and looks down on us from an eminence above the pyramids. The evidences of its phenomena runs back through the shadowy past, until they are lost in prehistoric periods. In every age some voice has spoken, vaguely, perhaps, out of the darkness, to admonish us that visible forms are not all of life, and that tangible substances do not embrace the more essential elements of being. The 28th chapter of 1st Samuel gives ample evidence that the woman of En-dor was an excellent true clairvoyant medium, a respectable woman, and when King Saul said to his servant, 'Seek me a woman that hath a familair spirit,' it plainly indicates that Saul realized there was a law which would enable him to communicate with Samuel, and he did rely upon the communication, and his servant was as well posted as I who have been in the city for the last thirty years when he immediately replied, 'There is one at En-dor,' and the message given by her proved true.

"All of the Christian sects have been preaching and teaching immortality, but when the absolute proof came they were not ready to accept it. The Modern Spiritual reformation dawned at Hydesville, Wayne County, N. Y., March 21st, 1848, but was fully established in November the same year at Rochester, N. Y., by the aid of Isaac Post, progressive member of the Society of Friends, of the Hicksite branch commonly called Quakers.

"From the beginning of the present movement Spiritualism has been obliged to contend with an unscrupu-

lous opposition. The enemy has employed every available means to mislead the public mind in respect to its real merits and the amazing magnitude of its proportions.

“For more than sixty years that opposition inspired at once by dogmatic theology of the church, the scientific materialism of the schools, and the popular skepticism of the time—has used the secular press to dispute and misinterpret the facts, to misrepresent our principles and practices before the world to conceal and prevent the truth, to caricature innocent persons and public assemblies, to excite feelings of disgust at the mere mention of the name, and of contempt for our most sacred convictions, to denounce all mediums as unprincipled tricksters, and to defame the honest disciple of a great but unpopular truth. Notwithstanding the opposition, it has continued to advance rapidly, and is making progress within all denominations.

“I am glad to know that the secular press has given much more attention to the subject. In its inception such scientists as Dr. Robert Hare and Prof. Mapes were converted. At the present time scientists are giving much attention to this all-important subject. Spiritualism does not deny any truth advanced by any denomination or scientific society; but erroneous opinions set forth as true, the laymen are unable to prove the opinion untrue and it is accepted for years. Ptolemy, King of Egypt, A. D. 150, advanced the theory that the sun and stars revolved around the earth every twenty-four hours. His subjects accepted this as true, but when Copernicus proved Ptolemy’s theory was not correct, he, knowing the disposition of those

in power, waited until on his deathbed and then divulged.

Galileo, about 100 years later, had solved the problem and found Copernicus correct, and published it. The Cardinals at Rome sentenced him to be burnt at the stake, if he did not publicly deny it."

CHAPTER VIII

There is one account more of a seance I wish to give you by this same medium Pierre L. O. A. Keeler, which has been promised me by my townsman and co-investigator, before mentioned, but as it has not yet come to hand, we will place this among the things to be expected, and fill in the interim with something that perhaps will interest you.

Did you ever hear of the Psychical Research Society?

Some of you will say, "Yes," and may look with surprise and wonder where I hail from, for asking such a question. But I premise the great majority of the people of our land if asked would say no they have never heard of it, or if they have they know nothing of it, what it has done or what it essays to do. I cannot go into details in regard to this guild from the fact that I have not its full history, and, if I had, it would likely be too cumbersome for the space I could give. So I will confine myself to the things that have interested me concerning this scientific and matter-of-fact society. A number of years ago when Modern Spiritualism was younger than now, this branch

society was formed in America with Dr. Richard Hodson, Prof. James H. Hyslop and Prof. William James at its head. These three men pledged each other that the one that crossed the "divide" first if he found himself alive and in possession of his personality, memory and mentality and there was such a thing as proving his identity to this Society, he would labor to that end as long as these other colleagues remained in the flesh. Well in the course of human events Richard Hodson died a few years ago, and whether he has proved his identity or no is what has agitated this Society as well as all believers in Spiritualism from the time of his exit till now. "Has Dr. Hodson been heard from?" There is no reason why we should not all be as much interested in this question as is Mr. Hyslop or Mr. James. If it is proved that Dr. Hodson still lives, and is heard from, this verdict could settle the millions of cases upon the occult calendar awaiting trial.

This case you will observe is unique in several respects. Dr. Hodson was an eminent man and purely "matter-of-fact, and at the outset entertained no belief whatever that consciousness survived the death of the body, and as all of these men are men of high position and have given their lives to the study of abstruse subjects, and that they have espoused this cause," to prove a matter scientifically, that should concern us above any that can engage our thoughts, "If a man dies, shall he live again." I will tell you as far as I have learned. "Has Dr. Hodson been heard from?"

We are indebted to Dr. Isaac K. Funk for permitting

us to copy from a book of his entitled, "The Psychic Riddle." Mr. Funk has probed Spiritualism much longer, and has had an experience vastly outmeasuring mine, he has contributed much along Spiritualistic lines that is of inestimable value to the searcher for truth.

"Communications purporting to come from Dr. Richard Hodson.

"I am for all personal purposes convinced of the persistence of human existence beyond bodily death, and although I am unable to justify that belief in full and complete manner, yet it is a belief that has been produced by *Scientific evidence*, that is, it is based upon facts and experience.

SIR OLIVER LODGE."

"Has any communication been received from Dr. Hodson since his death?

"Prof. James H. Hyslop thinks yes.

"He assures us that since the Doctor's death he has received communications which were so clear and evidential as to lead him to believe that the speaker was his old friend and co-worker.

"What are these communications?

"That is a matter of secondary importance.

"The matter of primary importance—and it is profoundly important and interesting—is that the communications were of a nature and given under such test conditions, that they fully convinced Prof. Hyslop of the identity of the spirit speaker. The Professor is not a novice at these investigations; he is well versed in modern psychology; intimately acquainted with all the latest facts and with explanatory theories as the sub-

liminal or subjective mind, second personalities, telepathy, the 'consciousness of circles.' Dr. J. Maxwell's novel theory; is as far removed from sentimentality as is one pole from the other; with a temperamental bent toward scientific materialism—it is a significant fact that both he and Dr. Hodson entered upon their psychic investigations believing that when man dies, his personality ends, that he—all of him—is tumbled into the bowels of the earth, is digested and assimilated, becoming possibly part of some other living organization, but will never know again his former self—is cool-headed, a trained scientist, a close observer, and is a keen logical thinker, having been, until ill health compelled him to resign, professor of logic in Columbia University.

“Besides, Professor Hyslop was probably more intimately acquainted than any other man on earth with the mental and spiritual idiosyncrasies of Dr. Hodson, a fact that should add great weight to his startling testimony. Should it not give the most skeptical of us pause, when such a one says to us, that he is convinced that he has had repeated intelligent communications from Dr. Hodson since his death?

“It would indeed be strange if there is a sane man on earth who is not stirred at the thought of a possible scientific demonstration of the belief that a man who dies lives again: I say *scientific* demonstration. ‘Man’s repellent attitude to new truths, even those of vital importance to himself, is one of the curious things of history.’”

(The truths—those surprising, amazing, unforeseen truths—which our descendants will discover, are even

now all around about, staring us in the eyes, so to speak and yet we see them not. But it is not enough to say we see them not; we do not wish to see them.)

“What fools we mortals be!”

“This fact should also carry weight: these ‘communications from Dr. Hodson’ came through Mrs. Piper, when she was in a deep trance, for there remain no grounds for reasonable doubt that when so-called communications come through her, Mrs. Piper is wholly unconscious. For many years this fact had been tested by every method known to medical science, by such experts as Dr. Hodson, Prof. Hyslop, and with not a little assistance from Prof. William James of Harvard, the most famous of American psychologists and others. Her utter unconsciousness when in trance was proven by touching her eyeballs and running a needle under her finger nails, and through her tongue, and by putting red pepper in her nostrils and throat—all these seemingly cruel tests were made without yielding any evidence of the slightest physical reaction. And then, in addition for many months her mail was watched, herself shadowed by detectives, she not being permitted even to have conversation with anyone except in the presence of representatives of the Society—this watch was under the direction of Dr. Hodson, whom Sir William Crooks pronounced before the Royal Society, as the keenest psychic detective that probably the world has ever seen.

“Dr. Hodson had schooled himself in physical jugglery and mental magic, having studied the art both in India and in the Western world. And, withal, he had what may be justly described as a detective’s instinct

for fraud along psychic lines, as is strikingly revealed in the narration of his exposure of Madame Blavatsky.

"He knew modern psychology. He had an eye that saw through the motives of men—also 'eyes and ears in his mind,' as was said of blind Huber, who saw more of being than any man with his physical eyes, even though aided by the microscope, ever before had seen. As has been said of another, Hodson could see and hear with his eyes, and hear and see with his ears.

"Thus equipped, Dr. Hodson had absolute charge of the movements of Mrs. Piper for twenty years, and subjected her to every test he could conceive of, and at the expiration of this score of years he died, a year ago, with perfect faith in her integrity. And now, after all these years of complete control of her 'sittings,' this medium's honesty is fully accepted by those who, with Dr. Hodson, were the American leaders of the Society for Psychical Research, and scarcely less absolutely by the European leaders of the same society. However, Prof. Hyslop tells us that though he regards her as wholly trustworthy, yet his conclusions in favor of the spirit hypothesis do not depend in the slightest upon her honesty, as his experiments with her are of such a nature that as far as the phenomena are concerned it does not signify in the slightest whether she is honest or dishonest. This also was true with Dr. Hodson's experiments.

"The plan adopted by what claimed to be Dr. Hodson's ghost, to identify himself, was simply to remind Prof. Hyslop of some facts that were known only to these two men, as:

"1. Tests which Prof. Hyslop made before Dr. Hod-

son's death through a medium who is the wife of a Congregational minister in New England, concerning whose supernormal powers he and Dr. Hodson had differed. In these spirit communications through Mrs. Piper, Dr. Hodson told Prof. Hyslop that since his death he had visited this medium and, 'I found things better than I thought.'

"2. He reminded Prof. Hyslop of a certain colored-water test that Hyslop had applied in testing a class of phenomena some 500 miles distant from Boston, and concerning which tests nothing had been mentioned in Mrs. Piper's presence prior to this spirit communication.

"3. He reminded Prof. Hyslop of a discussion that they had had over cutting down the manuscript of one of Hyslop's books several years ago. This and other communications were of an evidential test character.

"In making these communications there was, according to Prof. Hyslop, a display of a number of mental idiosyncrasies which were peculiarly characteristic of Dr. Hodson.

"True enough, many of the things recalled to Prof. Hyslop's memory are trivial, not the kind of things that the average mind is apt to suppose a spirit coming across the 'great divide' would bother to tell us about. But it must be borne in mind that the importance or triviality of the communication is not the vital point, but the fact of any communication from a spirit intelligence is inexpressibly important.

"Facts will not permit us to waive them aside because they seem to us to be trivial. Sooner or later they, if they be facts, will compel recognition—that is

their way; for a series of facts is as unyielding as a table of logarithms, and it is the business of science to account for them, however trivial they may seem to be. Sir Oliver Lodge, in a late paper before the Society for Psychical Research in London, talked sanely of the duty of scientists touching such matters. He insisted 'that psychic phenomena should be thoroughly investigated on their merits apart from all preconception. . . . In studying them, no phenomenon or instrument was too trivial; if the movement of an untouched object was a fact, and one hitherto unknown to science, it did not matter how trivial was the object moved. If a communication showed signs of hypernormal intelligence or clairvoyance, it mattered not how trifling was the event perceived.'

"But, after all, is it not true that it is by trivial things often we best identify old acquaintances? An important incident in their lives is apt to be known to a large number of people, and may have got into print, or otherwise noised abroad; hence, to be told about it is of little evidential value as to the identity of the speaker. Dr. Hodson again and again, when in the flesh, declared that spirits would best prove their identity by exactly the methods this intelligence here adopts. The following two incidents will illustrate the point:

"The wife of Judge A. H. Dailey, of Brooklyn, is a sensitive. One of her controls is a man who claims to have been a sea-captain, when on earth, declaring that he passed out of life during the Civil War. To identify himself, he described his early home in a small town in Massachusetts, where, he said, his mother's

grave could be seen in the old graveyard, the tombstone having on it her name, which name he gave to Judge Dailey. The Judge determined to visit the town, a town which neither he nor his wife had ever previously visited, nor had they ever heard of this sea-captain or of any members of his family—knew nothing, in fact, about him. He and his wife went to the town, found the gravestone in the old graveyard, and the name inscribed as told by the spirit. This was a trivial fact, but to Judge Dailey it was conclusive.

“It is difficult to see how telepathy or mind-reading or any theory of secondary personality could account for a fact of this sort, while coincidence and fraud are wholly debarred.

“A clergyman friend of mine who is very skeptical as to Spiritualism told me that on one occasion he, unannounced and without any previous plan, visited a seance in Boston, where he is sure that he was wholly unknown. In the circle a woman, not the medium, suddenly spoke to him, saying, ‘Pardon me, but I see a man in military uniform standing by your side, and he asks that I tell you “Willie Cullum” is here.’ The clergyman telling the story said, ‘I tried to appear indifferent and replied to the woman, “Well, what has William Cullum to say to me?” She replied, “He says he is not William but ‘Willie Cullum,’ and that he simply wishes you to know that he is here.”’

“My friend was dumfounded, for he says that in his college days, far distant from Boston, a most intimate friend of his was a Willie Cullum. This friend went to war and was killed. ‘We,’ continued the clergyman, ‘were so intimate that he would have been shocked if

I had called him William.' That little point about the name was trivial, yet are we not justified in giving it weight?

"Another case in point:

"Mrs. Pepper at one time announced that the spirit of a woman was present who gave her name as 'Martha,' and said that she was my mother, and that she had a grandchild with her whose name was 'Chester.' I replied, 'If the spirit is really my mother, can she not identify herself to me?' The reply was instantaneous: 'Isaac, do you remember that needle?'

"Twoscore years ago, when I was a lad at home in Springfield, Ohio, my mother, stepping from a chair, stepped on a needle that was standing upright in the carpet. It ran through her slipper into her foot. She called me from an adjoining room. I was unable to extract the needle until I secured a pair of pincers from a neighboring shoe-shop. Great suffering and paralysis followed, ending in death in about ten days. A needle is a little thing, but this incident was well selected to prove identity, with the exception that the fact was in my own mind. My brother 'B. F.,' some thirty years ago, buried a baby child in the West, by the name of 'Chester.' If I had ever known this fact, it had wholly passed from my memory."

We will not follow Mr. Funk any farther upon this subject, "Has Dr. Hodson Been Heard From?" We have later advices from the spirit realm upon this all-absorbing question. Through a report of this same Psychical Research Society, which appeared in a recent copy of the *Sunflower*:

"SIR OLIVER LODGE GIVES RESULTS OF A SERIES OF
EXPERIMENTS—REALITY OF CONTINUOUS LIFE.

"By Gustavus Myers.

"The long-awaited report of the experiments of Sir Oliver Lodge and other members of the British Society for Psychical Research in seeking to prove that communication can be carried on between living corporeal persons and the spirits of the departed has at last appeared. Although it has been published but a short time, the report has excited a tremendous commotion in scientific and religious circles in England. Doubtless it will have the same effect here.

"It was these experiments that caused Sir Oliver Lodge to declare recently before the British Society for Psychical Research that exhaustive tests had proved the survival of human intelligence in discarnate form. 'Well-known persons,' he said, 'are constantly purporting to communicate with us for the express purpose of patiently proving their known personalities and giving evidence of knowledge appropriate to them.

"'Not easily or early do we make this admission, in spite of the long conversations with what purported to be the surviving intelligence of those friends and investigators. We were by no means convinced of their identity until crucial proof, difficult even to imagine, had, according to some of our beliefs, been supplied.'

"Proposed Experiments Kept Secret Until Tests Made.

"In making this assertion, Sir Oliver did not reveal the nature of the experiments. He announced that he

would not anticipate the facts contained in the report, but would ask the world to wait until the report itself comprehensively appeared, when a more proper judgment could be formed of the base upon which he and his associate rested their conclusions. Since then, the scientific and a great part of the lay world has awaited with eager interest the publication of this important report.

“It was by no means a secret that the experimenters had the purpose in view of attempting to carry on definite, unmistakable communications with the spirits of Frederick W. H. Myers and Dr. Richard Hodson. Clergyman, poet, classical scholar, and scientist, Myers was a luminously brilliant investigator of psychic phenomena; his great work, ‘Human Personality,’ is one of the most original, profound and impressive works that has ever appeared from the pen of man. He was a leading member of the British Society for Psychical Research, with a genius for fathoming the secrets of the great unknown, and his death in 1901 was greatly deplored.

“Dr. Richard Hodson, a Boston physician, was long the secretary of the American Society for Psychical Research, and gave up years of his life to a painstaking, patient study of the whole range of psychical phenomena, closely questioning each, and distinguishing the genuine from the false.

“Expected Communications from Myers and Hodson.

“Apart, however, from the meager information that the experimenters purposed to get into communication,

if possible, with the discarnate intelligences of Myers and Hodson, nothing was known of the methods of the experimenters or of the results of the tests. This knowledge was carefully guarded from the outside world until the tests were brought to a conclusion and the results compared and weighed.

“The full details are now set forth in the report.

“To make the experiments as conclusive as the brain of mortal man could conceive, the British Society for Psychical Research decided to put various well-known mediums through a series of concordant ‘automatisms.’ Popularly explained, this means that arrangements were made to have parts of the same purported messages from spirit land conveyed through different mediums at the same time, although at a distance. One part, it was planned, would come through Mrs. Piper at one place, another part through Mrs. Verall at another place, and other parts through the agency of other mediums at still other places. This system of cross-correspondence was an original one; it had never been tried before; and at every stage it was subjected to the severest and most rigid scientific precaution and tests.

“At the invitation of the Council of the British Society for Psychical Research, Mrs. Piper went to England. The management of the sittings was entrusted by the council to a committee composed of the Right Hon. G. W. Balfour, then president of the Society; Sir Oliver Lodge, Frank Padmore, a well-known impartial critic of the spiritualistic hypothesis; Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, now president of the Society, and J. G. Podington. This committee decided that the

main objects of the experiments to be conducted with Mrs. Piper should be to encourage the developments of certain controls which had already been manifesting in her trance.

"These controls were discarnate intelligences giving the names of Henry Sidgwick, Frederick Myers and Richard Hodson.

CHAPTER IX

"Where and When the Piper Sitzings Were Held.

"Mrs. Piper gave 74 sittings in all. The first 13 of these were held either at Liverpool or Edgberton, under the direction of Sir Oliver Lodge. Then followed 58 sittings in London, Mr. Podington being in charge of 35, Mrs. Sidgwick of 19, and Miss Alice Johnson of two others. All of the London sittings, with the exception of five at Mrs. Piper's flat, took place in the smoking room of the Irish Literary Society, at No. 20 Hanover Square, which the committee had rented for the purpose.

"At these sittings the investigator in charge was present before the trance began and remained until Mrs. Piper regained normal consciousness. In no case did the investigator enter the seance room or come in contact with Mrs. Piper until she was fully entranced, and in every case left the room before the end of the trance, not to come in contact again with Mrs. Piper until the next or some subsequent trance was in progress.

"While Mrs. Piper was producing automatic writ-

ing in either Liverpool, Edgberton, or London, five other mediums or psychics were being experimented with simultaneously at different and distant places.

"These were Mrs. Verrall, the wife of the noted English scholar; her daughter, Miss Helen Verrall; Mrs. Thomson, and two ladies known to the British Society for Psychical Research under the pseudonyms of Mrs. Forbes and Mrs. Holland. Mrs. Thompson's participation, however, was cut short by the unexpected death of her husband. Most of Mrs. Verrall's writing was done either at Cambridge or Matlock Bath, or on the train between London and Cambridge. Mrs. Verrall wrote automatically at other places. Both Mrs. and Miss Verrall knew that experiments were being made with Mrs. Piper, but Mrs. Holland was in India, and throughout the entire series of experiments remained in absolute ignorance of what was written by the other mediums. So, likewise, did Mrs. Piper, 'unless,' the report says, 'it be that she remembers in her normal state things said to her during her trances, and even then the evidential value of the results would be unaffected, for all she could have learned in this way was either that an experiment had been successfully accomplished or that it had failed.'

"The script of Mrs. Verrall and that of Miss Verrall were sent at first to Mr. Piddington, and then to Miss Alice Johnson, a leading member of the British Society, who, in every case, noted on the envelope or on the script itself the date and hour when it reached them.

"Mrs. Holland's script was sent to Miss Johnson, who indorsed each script with the date of its arrival.

In all, 120 experiments in cross-correspondence were made.

“The Methods Pursued by Mrs. Piper in France.

“‘The external features of Mrs. Piper’s trance,’ says the report, ‘may be briefly described as follows: Mrs. Piper sits at a table with a pile of cushions in front of her, and composes herself to go into a trance. After an interval varying from two to three to ten minutes, her head drops on the cushions, with the face turned to the left and the eyes closed, her right hand falling at the same time on to a small table placed on her right side.

“‘A pencil is put between her fingers, and the hand proceeds to write. The writing being done without the aid of sight, and the arm in a more or less strained position, it is often difficult to decipher, at least without practice; but in spite of its not being easy to read, it is remarkably consistent in character, so that its peculiarities once grasped, the correct interpretation of all but a very few words is not a matter of conjecture.

“‘The coming out of the trance is a longer process than the going into trance. After the hand has ceased to write the medium remains quiescent for a few minutes. She then raises herself slowly, and often with difficulty, from the cushions.

“‘When the body is erect she begins to speak. Her utterance at first is usually indistinct, but as she gradually regains her normal condition it becomes clearer.’

“All of the sittings which Mrs. Piper gave in England were, with one exception, ‘writing,’ and not

'voice' sittings; that is to say, automatism took the form of writing and not of speech, except during the waking stage. The 'writing' sittings possess one advantage over the voice sittings, namely, that the automatic phenomena which occur in them by their very nature record themselves.

"Purported Communications Made in Writing.

"The report declared that the trance script was always kept out of Mrs. Piper's sight, and taken away at the end of the sitting, so that she never saw it or had access to it at any time. In her normal condition she neither asked for nor received any information whatever about what had happened at the sittings, except that 'she was occasionally told that the results were considered interesting and promising, and that they were of a different nature from what had previously been obtained.'

"At the very beginning of the sittings there came correspondence of the most definite character, in the production of which there seemed to be the fullest evidence both of supernormal intelligent direction and ingenuity.

"On January 2, 1907, at 12.30 P. M., Calcutta (6.30 A. M. Greenwich time), Mrs. Holland, during a trance at Calcutta, automatically wrote a script containing the names Frances and Ignatius. Some five or six hours later, at a sitting in London, Mr. Piddington asked what purported to be the spirit of Myers what were the real names of Mrs. Piper's two controls who called themselves 'Imperator' and 'Rec-

tor.' Myers, according to Mr. Piddington, spontaneously replied, by the medium of Mrs. Piper's automatic writing, that they were Francis and Ignatius. It is possible that these coincidences might have been accidental, but this objection could not be applied by any process of reasoning to the results of the sitting of January 1, 1907. At this sitting, Mrs. Piper fell into her usual trance, and the spirit of Myers purported to appear, writing by her hand with his distinct characteristics and style of chirography. To make a definite and unmistakable test, Mr. Piddington asked Myers to draw a certain design when giving his messages through other mediums. The report describes this conversation through Mrs. Piper:

"'Piddington—Myers, when you send a message to, say, Mrs. Verrall, and then a similar message to Mrs. Holland, could you not mark each with some simple but distinctive design?

"'Myers—I am not quite sure that I understand you. Do you mean when I give a message to make a sign after or before the written message?

"'Piddington—Yes; if you wrote, for instance, "sunshine" through Mrs. Verrall, and then afterward through Mrs. Holland you might put, say, a triangle within a circle, or some simple design like that, to show that there is another message to be looked for corresponding with the message so marked.'

"When the investigators received the script of Mrs. Verrall's automatic writing they were immensely astonished and highly gratified to note in it a circle with triangle within it distinctly drawn. This script embodied a cross-correspondence which Sir Oliver Lodge

and his associate experimenters at once were forced to conclude was undoubtedly successful. Mrs. Verrall's drawing was unmistakable. Although one of Mrs. Holland's scripts written in far-off India contained geometrical drawings in which were a circle and a triangle, the cross-correspondence in this case was really confined to three mediums, Mrs. Verrall, Miss Verrall and Mrs. Piper."

The reader should study this report carefully to get a clear understanding of the plan and the test. Here it is in a nutshell: Suppose you were making a similar test, to prove or disprove the claims of Spiritualism. You have employed three mediums, placed, say, ten miles distant from each other. You are communicating to a purported spirit through one of these mediums, and you ask this spirit if he could control these other two mediums, now at this time, or as near this time as may be, to give a message through them with a definite sign placed before, like a triangle within a circle.

He would tell you he thought he could, and it should be done within a short space of time. And these mediums, each and all, absolutely ignorant of the whole plan. What other verdict could be rendered other than the spiritualistic hypothesis?

This promised account of a public "seance" given by Pierre L. O. A. Keeler, at Lily Dale, N. Y., by this co-investigator and townsman, is at hand, and I will now give it you just as received from him.

"On August 19, 1908, I attended a public 'seance' given by Pierre L. O. A. Keeler, in the Library hall,

Lily Dale. I went early and selected a seat in the second row from the front, and which was about fifteen feet from the end of the platform where the 'business' was to be done. The platform was raised about 18 inches above the floor of the hall. It was in the evening, and the hall was well lighted with electric lights. Fifteen to twenty minutes after my arrival Mr. Keeler came, with a man helper, and they had with them a slate-colored curtain, a tambourine, a guitar, and a few other articles. I watched them put up the curtain and arrange the cabinet, all done in plain sight and in a good light. The curtain was strung across the corner of the room on the stage, the curtain reaching from the two walls of the building, and was about eight feet in length, and about five feet in height, strung tightly by a cord along the top. The cabinet was so arranged that no window or other opening came within the space of the cabinet. In the cabinet was placed a small stand and the guitar upon it; and nothing else was in the cabinet. After it was arranged, Mr. Keeler invited any who wished to come forward and examine it and look inside, which I, among others, did. It was very light, and everything could be seen as in daylight. He then asked that a man and woman come forward from the audience who were strangers to him and to each other. Many volunteered. The two that came first got the job. These, with Mr. Keeler, were to form the battery. Three chairs were arranged in front of the curtain, close together, facing the audience and equally distant from either end of the curtain. At our right sat Mr. Keeler, next him the woman, and at her right the man. Mr. Keeler held the left arm

of the woman between the shoulder and elbow with his right hand, and the wrist of the woman's same arm with his left hand, instructing her to tell the audience if he relaxed his hold. The man held the woman's right arm with his left hand, his right being all the time in view. The attendant then placed in front of the sitters a second curtain of the same material, arranged so that it fitted tightly about the neck of each sitter, extending from end to end of the other curtain and to the floor, leaving their heads in view. Mr. Keeler then asked the man and woman to describe to the audience any sensation of feeling which they should experience. They did so from time to time. First one, then the other, felt something scratching or tapping them on the back, shoulder, neck, etc. Mr. Keeler also said he was having a similar experience. This grew more and more pronounced, until one or another of the sitters dodged, saying they had received a hard blow or jolt on some part of their person.

"Mr. Keeler stated that George (meaning George Christy, his control or guide) was present, and addressing him; he asked him if he could play for them on the guitar. Sitting in front of the cabinet and five or six feet away was the helper of Mr. Keeler, and Mr. Keeler requested him to play softly on the violin to help 'George' get started, which was done. The guitar in the cabinet was played, faintly at first, but gradually grew louder, and when 'George' seemed to get on his job, the attendant ceased to play on the violin; but the guitar within the cabinet was played loudly and as strong as it could have been played by *any* player. In fact, it at times was played very

strongly and made a very din, and it could be heard moving about on the stand, and time struck on the frame sometimes as well as on the strings. The guitar was thrown violently on the floor; it was picked up again and slammed down on the stand; it was thrust under each chair in turn, and protruded well out from under the curtain in plain view, being played at the time. It was rapped down on the heads of the sitters, and Keeler was knocked on the head a good smart blow.

“After a time George seemed to tire of the guitar, and Mr. Keeler requested his attendant to take the guitar, which was handed up over the top of the curtain, and hand over to ‘George’ in its place the tambourine. ‘George’ then performed great stunts on that, playing it with split clothespins for drumsticks, spinning it about above the curtain on a cane that the attendant handed over to him, and finally throwing it over the curtain on to the stage-floor violently, together with the cane and drumsticks.

“This ended the first half of the performance. The battery was then changed; a new man and woman were called up, ‘strangers,’ as before, and the same arrangement was made of the sitters. Mr. Keeler then stated that ‘George’ would write messages to various persons from departed spirits, and the attendant would receive them as they were handed over the curtain and read only the name signed to the message, and if any present recognized it as intended for him or her to receive it. A small pencil tablet and pencil were then handed over the curtain and received at the top. The electric light nearest the curtain was turned off; this

left the curtain fairly lighted, so that everything could be readily and plainly seen, as there were six or more electric lights remaining in the room. Mr. Keeler stated that it was necessary that he should have a subdued light in order to get the best results from message writing. When all was ready, the writing on the stand in the cabinet began. From where I sat I could clearly hear the pencil writing on the tablet, which evidently lay upon the table. The writing was very rapid and the hand seemed to run very strong; I could hear the leaf torn from the tablet. As these were written and torn off, they were handed up over the top of the curtain and the attendant took them and read the name signed, and someone in the audience would arise and say, 'That is for me.' From forty to fifty messages were thus handed over the curtain, and all were claimed but two or three, and no owners could be found for those. When the several messages were handed up over the curtain I often saw part of a hand as it tendered the message. These were handed up usually between the heads of the man and woman, sometimes at the right of the man. If it was the hand of Mr. Keeler, his arm must have been stretched out five or six feet in length; and, then, the woman said he did not relax his hold on her arm. And I watched him closely; he sat erect, quietly, and seemed to make no move or effort. Then a hand came out through the curtain, sometimes one side of the man's head, sometimes on the other, never near Mr. Keeler. This hand was clearly seen up to one or two inches on the wrist. It seemed to beckon to some person, and Mr. Keeler requested the person indicated to come up

and allow the hand to write a message. One by one many came up from the audience, held a tablet in position, placed a pencil in the hand, and the hand wrote a message. It would then lay the pencil down on the tablet and shake hands with the person and withdraw. This hand appeared to be the hand of a large man, about such a proportioned hand as Mr. Keeler's, but it was impossible that Mr. Keeler could reach the required distance with his natural arm to the point where this hand appeared. This hand looked from where I sat rather clammy and lifeless, and appeared sometimes to move with uncertainty, and I thought a few times it was an imperfect hand, lacking a portion of a finger or more.

"After this, Mr. Keeler requested any who wished to come up to the curtain and look in and have 'George' play for them on the guitar, which had been handed over the curtain. They did so, coming up one at a time and looking over the corner of the curtain at the right of the man, which was the corner nearest the audience. 'It' played for many, for some faintly, for some quite loudly; for one woman who sat directly in front of me, it played well for her while she was looking over the curtain, the guitar being raised as it was played from the table to the top of the curtain. She told me she saw nothing except the stand and the guitar, and saw the guitar lifted from the table, but could see nothing that lifted it. I went up and looked into the cabinet and asked 'him' to play for me, but there was not a sound. I fancied 'he' did not like me. There were others that 'he' would not play for.

"When this had ended, there was a garment thrown violently over the curtain on to the stage. Just at the instant Mr. Keeler seemed to dodge his head, and as the garment came over the curtain, Mr. Keeler said, 'There, "he" has taken off my coat.' And it proved to be Mr. Keeler's coat.

"After the writings on the tablets, at Mr. Keeler's request someone handed over a white handkerchief, which was thrust back through the curtain; it was then hung on the top of the curtain, and the corner outside of the curtain pulled through the curtain very slowly, drawing the entire handkerchief through. Mr. Keeler, before the seance began and while putting up the curtain, explained that there were no apertures in the curtain, and after it was up, several went up and examined it very closely and said there were no holes or apertures in it. At the close of the seance many went up and looked everything over, and I, with others, waited and saw Mr. Keeler and his helper take down the curtain, bundle them and go home. But I saw no more of 'George Christy.' I received no message at this seance.

"I do not undertake to explain or account for anything. I only tell what I saw and heard."

CHAPTER X

My conservative friend does not deem it wise to offer an opinion upon this phenomena he witnessed. He gives the facts and leaves the reader to draw his own conclusions. I knew a man in this town who, a few

years ago, was enjoying the belief of scientific materialism, and believed at death he was going to have a sweet night's rest co-eternal with eternity itself. I invited this man to look into the subject of Modern Spiritualism and see what the effect might be.

With investigation, be it more or less, there must be an awakening of thought; and whether an opinion is expressed or not, there must, from the very nature of the case, be an opinion in regard to the manifestations witnessed, and these opinions must ripen into conclusions sooner or later, either for or against the claims set forth. I am speaking of those who are alive, not to the apathetic class whose minds do not seem to be awakened to a degree to receive impressions.

This man I considered among the former, and after a course of time, after he had given this new subject (new to him) some thought, and had read some of the works of those who had probed the subject and declared there was no other rational solution but the spiritualistic.

Not long since, in conversation with him, I asked him what conclusion he had arrived at in regard to Spiritualism; while he did not avow a firm belief entirely free from doubt, but he allowed that he believed it. Well, said I, the question about belief is vested in this: Which is the most enjoyable, and how does your enjoyment compare with your former belief, "that death ended all"? His reply was that he enjoyed himself better as he now believed. This is important. While our belief does not affect the plans or purposes of the Almighty,

“Yet he has given us in this dark estate
To know the good from ill,
And binding nature fast in fate
Left free the human will.”

We are free to believe as we will, but the paths of wisdom have been declared the most enjoyable by all the sages of the past to tread, and “wisdom” and “truth” must forever be one and inseparable. Have we not, then, a right to premise that demonstrated truth is the most enjoyable thing that humanity can attain to? And I will add that the claims of theology are no more satisfying to reason than is bald materialism.

I will now give you the promised communication from my wife's old friend, A. J. Yeomans, now in spirit-life:

“Greeting to you, my dear friend, and your worthy husband. I never was a very great scribe, but in defense of Spiritualism I am awake and alive and endorse it every time, as the only safe religion, if you will call it so, for it takes the sting from death, and opens up an avenue between the two worlds, with the assurance that man shall live again after the turmoil and cares of this life are over. What a glorious light after total darkness! I have been a student in this life, looking into this affair of this great question of the immortality of the soul after its transition. How wonderful to me, yet after my arrival on this plane, how false I found what I had been taught to believe from my childhood! I know, my dear friend, you were al-

ways thoughtful for one of your years: Tell your husband to finish his book; in its pages give all the tests he can muster, for it will be more convincing and will take and benefit mankind. The world needs something it has never had yet. I cannot give you anything more convincing than you already have got. I will tell you one thing: Be harmonious, keep level-headed, and I hope to meet you and all the old-time friends on this plane. This may be a little disjointed. Wishing you good luck and success in your earth-life, and in the publishing of so good a work as your volume will be for the good of misguided man, again I will bid you good-night.

[Signed] "A. J. YEOMANS."

I now feel impressed to give you an account of a seance with the Fox Sisters, in commemoration of the fifty-ninth anniversary of Modern Spiritualism:

"For the benefit of the hosts of Spiritualists who are not so situated that they can see or personally participate in materializing seances, I wish to make record of the celebration of the 59th anniversary of the Fox sisters, at Mrs. C. M. Sawyer's, 3003 Dixon Street, St. Louis, Mo. For many years Mrs. Sawyer has celebrated the Fox sisters' anniversary, or the anniversary of Modern Spiritualism, if you prefer, by night, the 31st of March, this year, was no exception giving a seance in honor of its foundation, and Sunday to the rule.

"About twenty-five composed the circle, and while there were many beautiful manifestations to the vari-

ous sitters, all accorded in heart and mind, the privileges and honors of the occasion to the three sisters who, at Hydesville, N. Y., fifty-nine years ago, gave heed to the little raps which have since resounded around the world, and reached the intelligence of humanity throughout the universe, wherever the mentality of men and women was ready to receive the message. Those on the spirit side of life having found a way to reach man on the earth-plane, and give him intelligible communication, commencing with the raps to which the Fox sisters responded, it is merely stating a truth to say that similar raps are now listened to and welcomed in thousands of homes, while all the phases of mediumship, up to the most wonderful of all—that of materialization—are constantly attracting an ever-increasing number of people. True Spiritualists need not be ashamed of their company, as many of the brightest minds of the world are avowed Spiritualists. Among those who have given spirit phenomena a most searching scientific inquiry, for the purpose of satisfying themselves as to whether what is claimed is true or not, may be mentioned Professor Crooks, England's foremost chemist; Bishop Colby, of the Church of England; Lombroso, the Italian, and the greatest criminologist of the age; Flammarion, the leading French astronomer, not to mention thousands who have made no 'noise' in the world, but whose investigations have brought to them the knowledge that under proper conditions those who have passed through the gate of death may and do return to those still in the mortal form.

“After the usual preliminaries, followed by half a

dozen materializations, Elon, the cabinet control, addressed the circle, saying: 'Friends, I am very pleased to be with you here to-night. A year ago to-night I met some of you now present to celebrate this 59th anniversary of the raps heard by the little Fox sisters at Hydesville, N. Y. The name of the spirit was given through the simple means of the alphabet. . . . I now take great pleasure in introducing to you Margaret Fox Kane.'

"The curtains were pushed aside and a form arrayed in celestial white stepped out slowly; she crossed the room to where I was sitting and took my hand. I gave her welcome, and as she shook hands with Mr. Parker she said: 'I was only eight years old when we first heard the raps at our home at Hydesville.' The circle applauded and thanked her for the visit, whereupon she retired to the cabinet. Elon requested me to step up to the cabinet, as he wished her to come out again. When she appeared, she took both my hands in hers and dematerialized in full view of the circle.

"After this, 'Maudie,' the cabinet messenger, related an amusing circumstance of a lady calling on Mrs. Sawyer a few days previously, who said she had been a Spiritualist for over forty years. Mrs. Sawyer spoke with pride of the Fox sisters as instruments in the founding of Modern Spiritualism. The visiting lady (although a Spiritualist for forty years) wanted to know who were the Fox sisters.

"Leah Fox Underhill was the next one of the sisters to materialize. She also honored me by coming straight across to where I was sitting and offering her

hand. I arose, and as we moved back toward the cabinet she informed the circle that 'she was thirty when her two younger sisters began this great work, and being at home less than they, did not have so much to do with it as Margaret and Kate.'

"After Leah returned to the cabinet, Maudie requested me to come to the door. When I approached Leah held out her hands, and drawing me near, whispered a very gratifying message in my ear, a memorandum of which is incorporated in my notes of the evening, and to which I hope I shall have occasion to refer in a letter to your paper at some time in the future—perhaps some years hence. I do not feel that it would be proper to now say just what the message was, but I do want this recorded reference to it for future citation. It may mean far more than anyone can now guess. Leah also dematerialized, after meeting Mr. Davis and a few others.

"When Kate Fox Jenkins appeared, she was gorgeously costumed, and wore a crescent on her head and a large cross and two stars on her breast. It has been my pleasure to meet this martyr to the cause of Spiritualism in most of the circles I have attended at Mrs. Sawyer's. When she comes she is a beautiful exemplification of what the spirit power of the cabinet is capable of doing; yet I have never seen her more strong and beautiful than she was on this occasion. She also dematerialized outside the cabinet.

"No doubt each one in the circle noted the difference in the size of the three sisters, Leah being the largest, while Kate was the smallest, the difference being sufficiently marked to be quickly noted.

“Besides many messages from the cabinet to those present, a large number of materializations took place, including Nana, to Mr. Parker; daughter of Captain Spohr to her father; Emma to Mr. Becker; Mrs. Menzimer to her husband and other members of her family; Minnie, another daughter of Captain Spohr, to her father; Mary to Mr. and Mrs. Kerr; Mrs. Menzimer again, with striking beautiful breastplate design of poppies and two stars and crown; Charlotte Temple with bouquet, which she always brings—on this occasion left in the hands of Mrs. Davis, when it slowly dematerialized; Niesis to Professor Falder; George to Mrs. Townsend. Mrs. Oglesby and family kept time on mandolin while circle sang ‘Abide with Me’; William Henry Garvin, who said, ‘I am Aileen’s brother, and I want to speak to Frank.’ When I went to the cabinet he stood in the door, gave his message, and emphatically confirmed what I had heard from Leah Fox earlier in the evening. He reached over the heads of those in the first row of chairs to shake hands with Mr. Parker, and as he did so, said, ‘Shake, old boy!’ Maudie, speaking from the cabinet, said, ‘There is no imagination about that.’

“There were many other manifestations during the evening, but lest I trespass upon space I will not attempt to mention them all. The seance was a great success, and we hope that we may have the pleasure of a similar occasion March 31, 1908—and many succeeding years—at Mrs. Sawyer’s.

“F. L. ROBINSON,

“4667 Evens Avenue.

“St. Louis, Mo., April 3, 1907.”

I will now give an account of a series of seances given under the auspices of Dr. Isaac K. Funk. Mr. Funk, as you will observe, is a hard man to convert, and what he has given to the world under the head of spiritual phenomena has had to pass through all kinds of fire, and then be scrutinized with all of the different "rays" that have received an alphabetic prefix.

This made this account valuable to me, for of all the things I despise on the face of this earth, is trying to deceive in matters relating to Religion; and Spiritualism, since it teaches and claims to prove what it teaches (a continued existence) a thing that the orthodox churches have been blindly groping after. Therefore, I consider Spiritualism a religion (demonstrated). Some firm believers claim that Spiritualism is not properly a religion. Religion signifies a rebinding; and to those who have been bound by orthodox ligatures and by materialistic, and have unwrapped themselves from these and religatured themselves with the Spiritualistic belief, I claim are entitled to the name "Religion."

I am indebted and all who may be interested in this account, are indebted to Mr. Funk, for it is apparent, the pains he has taken and the expense he has been to in getting these seance accounts with this medium Mrs. French for what are known as "Independent Voices."

"What are known in spiritualistic parlance as independent voices are a startling class of phenomena—hard to believe as are those of materialization.

What is an independent voice?

By this name the spiritualist usually means that the spirit entity organizes a set of vocal organs independent of the medium's body, and talks through these

organs. A heavy draft this, on credulity, for it asks us to believe that there is extemporized out of hand in the seance room a human throat, larynx, vocal cords, palate, tongue, teeth, lips, and lungs,—or something equivalent to them—all this in a few minutes of time.

“Immensely absurd,” of course, nine out of ten average readers will exclaim.

“Can we believe it? That is not the question. The question to be settled is, is it a fact? If a fact, that settles it; but so strange a fact must be supported by proof of an incontestable sort. If a fact, we must accept it, and then account for how and when we can.”

“In the early part of 1905 I received a letter from a prominent lawyer in Buffalo, N. Y.—Mr. E. C. Randall, head of the firm of Randall, Hurley, and Porter, requesting that I investigate ‘A remarkable medium’ of his acquaintance, by the name of Emily S. French, through whom come independent voices and for whose honesty he would vouch. Said he, ‘About fourteen years ago I became acquainted with this woman. I was sure her phenomena were the result of fraud, and I determined to expose it. After many sittings and exacting experiments I became convinced that they were genuine, and finally, at the suggestion of the spirit intelligences, I had fitted up a seance-room in my own house in which my wife, the medium, and myself held seances, and we have done this now for more than a dozen years. I have tested Mrs. French in every way I can think of, and am thoroughly convinced that the phenomena are what they claim to be. The talks are often exceedingly instructive, and I have had many of them taken down in shorthand. I wish you would do

me and others here the favor to investigate thoroughly these manifestations, and I would be very glad to have you visit us and remain as long as you desire at my house for this purpose. Every facility for thorough scientific investigation will be granted you. Rest assured you will find the phenomena exactly what I tell you they are.'

"About the same time I received an urgent letter from an editor of one of the leading dailies in the western part of the State urging a 'scientific investigation of some extraordinary psychic phenomena that came through a Mrs. French, and which are perplexing some of our best minds. The phenomena are much out of the ordinary, and the medium is not a public medium who exhibits for pay.'"

Shortly after this correspondence, Mr. A. W. Moore, the secretary of the Rochester Art Club, wrote to me as follows—I quote very fully from his letter as its story is interestingly told: (I will quote it as given for the same reason).

"My attention was called to Mrs. French's phase of mediumship about twenty years ago, when I was on the editorial staff of the 'Union and Advertiser,' Rochester, N. Y. At that time I was not only an unbeliever in spiritual manifestation, but prejudiced against it, believing it nothing but fraud. In reporting it to the press I always treated mediumship with ridicule and sarcasm.

"One summer's day I had occasion to visit Hemlock Lake, and there met by chance J. Nelson Tubbs, the well known civil engineer, and now Inspector of the Erie Canal. Our conversation drifted into Spiritual-

ism, which I so firmly discountenanced and ridiculed that he asked me when, where, and how long I had investigated the subject. I had to confess that I had really investigated the subject very slightly. He pointed out the inconsistency of my condemning mediumship and taking such strong grounds against it without ever having taken the trouble to examine into the subject, and he warned me to be careful in writing about it until I got better posted. Mr. Tubbs then gave me an account of his investigations carried on during a series of years, which resulted in his being a firm believer in spirit-return. He gave an account of his experiences with various mediums, and particularly the phase of manifestation peculiar to Mrs. French, viz.: Independent voices. He advised me to have a talk with Judge Dean Shuart of Rochester, who was for many years Judge of the Surrogate Court of Monroe County. 'The fact that two such level-headed men—one an eminent civil engineer and mathematician, demanding "weight and measure" in his profession; the other, a learned jurist and a man of such unimpeachable character, that he had been repeatedly elected to the responsible office of Surrogate Judge—had professed their full belief in Spiritualism, caused me to reflect deeply. I, therefore, on my return home, sought out Judge Shuart, and that gentleman told me many things that set me to thinking. He spoke of Mrs. French, and arranged for me to attend a private seance at the house of a mutual friend.

"In the meantime, with a newspaper man's soul, I found out something about the lady's antecedents. She belongs to the American branch of the Pierrepont

family, the head of which is the Earl of Manners, whose principal estate is at Holme Pierrepont, Nottinghamshire, England. I borrowed a book giving the history of the American branch, in which there is a list of the members of the family then living in the United States. In the list I found the name of the late Judge Pierrepont, one time minister to the Court of St. James, London, and at the very end, I found the names of Mrs. Emily S. French, and her only child, Mrs. D. Oberst.

"Mrs. French is the widow of the late Lieutenant French, of the United States Volunteers, who lost his life during the War of the Rebellion. She draws the pension of an officer's widow. For many years she has made her home with her daughter, and her chief pleasure in life is administering to the comfort and education of her grandchildren. She is a lady of refinement, and possesses the charming, unassuming, and gentle manners of a well-born race.

"With this information I attended a seance as arranged by Judge Shuart. There were present, besides my wife and myself, Mr. and Mrs. Austin (our hosts), and Judge Shuart and one or two others. We met in a small room upstairs, and after being seated and taking hold of hands in a circle, the light was extinguished. It was explained to me that it was absolutely necessary that not the slightest trace of light be allowed to enter the room. Judge Shuart asked all present to sing, saying that vibrations were necessary. We therefore sang several familiar songs and afterwards talked on various subjects, when all at once, a voice, loud and sonorous, high above our heads exclaimed: 'I greet you my friends!' The suddenness of the voice startled all

present into silence, and the speaker continued to talk. After continuing for a while, the voice said: 'Ask any questions you may wish, and I will answer them to the best of my ability.' I asked, 'What is your name?' The answer came 'I was known as Red Jacket when in the mortal.' I then asked him to describe conditions in the spirit-world and the passing of the spirit out of the body. In reply, Red Jacket gave a long talk on his own experience. He said at the time of his passing out he was in a very low spiritual condition, due to the excessive use of fire-water, which the white man had taught him to indulge in, and also of his intense hatred of the 'palefaces' on account of their having robbed his people of their hunting-grounds, etc. He then described some of the ordeals his spirit had to undergo in order to overcome the desire for strong drink, which still clung to him, and to turn his hatred of the white man into love.

"I can merely touch upon my experience at this seance. Other voices came, male and female. My impression at the close of the seance was that the whole thing was an imposture, and I determined to find it out somehow. I told Judge Shuart frankly that the voices were made by some living person, and that if he would examine the cellar of the house he would find leading from thence to the room. The Judge immediately requested me to go with him into the cellar, a damp, low-ceilinged place, full of cobwebs, but we saw not the slightest indication of a speaking-tube. I then fell back on ventriloquism, and accused Mr. Austin of doing the business.

"To all of this Judge Shuart listened kindly, and

suggested that I follow up my investigations until I had discovered the fraud. 'If there is a fraud in Mrs. French's circles,' the Judge said, 'I would like to know it, because my time is too precious to waste by attending these seances.' Continuing, he said, 'I have been sitting with Mrs. French from time to time for the past five years and tested her in every possible way that my mind could suggest, but I have never discovered the slightest trace of fraud. My friend, you will if you continue your investigations, be compelled to acknowledge that Mrs. French's voices are occasioned by a power beyond the material, and the only conclusion you can arrive at is that they are, as they claim to be, Spiritual.'

"To be brief I will say I attended another seance at the house of Mr. Austin, with the full conviction that I would be able to detect Mr. Austin as the ventriloquist. But on arriving at the house I found that he had been telegraphed for by his son, who was mayor of a town in Colorado. Consequently, the seance took place without the presence of the man I suspected.

"The voices came as usual and stronger than on the previous occasion. I was placed next to Mrs. French in the circle, and took hold of her left hand, her other hand being taken by Judge Shuart. When the voices came, Mrs. French placed her mouth on the back of my hand until the spirits ceased talking. While Red Jacket delivered an address, his voice suddenly seemed to die out like the notes of an organ when the wind fails, and he exclaimed, 'Sing!' When his voice came again he explained that the cause of his voice failing was lack of vibrations, and he entered upon a discourse

regarding the wonderful atmospheres, electrical conditions, ethers, and vibratory forces of which mortals were quite ignorant, that formed the conditions that enabled spirits to throw their voices into our atmosphere. At the conclusion of this seance I was just as skeptical as ever, and still more determined to fathom the mystery of the voices.

"I went again and again to the seances held by Mrs. French, and I took with me one of the chief skeptics in the city, Mr. J. McCall, who denounced the whole proceeding as a fraud, but he failed to point it out. His vehement denunciation of Mrs. French aroused me to protest, and I said, surely before you are so loud in your condemnation, you ought to point out where the voices came from. 'The fact is,' I said, 'I am beginning to think that they may be spirit-voices, because I have exhausted every device for detecting fraud, and failed.' 'Did you ever have Mrs. French give a seance at your own house?' asked Mr. McCall. 'No,' said I. Then replied he, 'if you can get her to produce the voices in your house, you will find, if she accepts the invitation, that the thing won't work. I asked Mrs. French if she would come to my house. She replied that nothing would give her greater pleasure. A few days afterward, Mr. McCall and wife were at our house and I suggested that it would be a good opportunity to have Mrs. French over. I walked to her house, a short distance away, and brought her back with me. We sat in my study, and there were present on the occasion Mr. and Mrs. McCall, a nephew of mine just arrived from England, my wife, and myself. We had no sooner turned out the light when Red Jacket said in

the loudest tones I had yet heard: 'You see, brother Moore, I can come to you even in your own house!' He then went on to describe the work he was doing as a missionary spirit. It took him a long time, he said, to outgrow earth conditions and appetites, in order that he might try and undo many things he had done in the flesh. His great anxiety was to come and return good for evil among those whom he called the pale-faces. He was happy when he attracted the attention of the white men so that he could teach them something of spiritual law. He said the spirits are working very hard to bring about conditions by which there can be an intercommunication between the two worlds, and the time is coming, said Red Jacket, when materialized spirits would appear upon platforms and address large audiences. The reason that Indian spirits took a large part in spiritual manifestations is because America was their hunting-ground, and the red men lived close to Nature and were thus tremendously magnetic.

"Well, in brief, the seance was most wonderful; not only did Red Jacket come with great power, but several other spirits who spoke on different topics.

"The result of this seance was, that Mr. McCall shook hands with me and said, 'Moore, I believe the voices are spiritual.' From that date Mr. McCall became a thorough believer and prominent in Spiritualistic circles."

"Here is a part of Mr. Moore's letter that interested me very much.

"Since that period I have attended so many of Mrs. French's circles that it would be impossible to give in letter the many wonderful communications I have had.

. . . I think I can say that I have attended in the neighborhood of one thousand of Mrs. French's seances in the last twenty years.

"I have learned enough wisdom from the old Seneca Sachem Red Jacket regarding spiritual things to fill a large volume. His sermons are at times full of pathos and beauty, and I have known the circle to be brought to tears by his eloquence. He lays great stress on the necessity of living lives of purity, temperance, and benevolence.

"He admonishes us especially to be charitable toward those who oppose the spiritual philosophy and cling tenaciously to dogmatic theology. He tells us not to try and convert people, but by our example and words draw them to inquire into that which gives blessings and peace to us.

"I might add many things to this testimony regarding Mrs. French, whom I believe to be a most honorable and trustworthy lady, who would scorn to do a dishonest thing, and would never for one moment give herself over to fraud and deceit. The fact is she does not have to, as her manifestations are among the most wonderful and instructive to be found in the world to-day.

(Signed) "A. W. MOORE.

CHAPTER XI

"Mr. Moore in his correspondence again and again urged that I undertake a serious investigation of the psychic phenomena as manifested through Mrs. French.

Earnest as were these and other urgings, I said 'No!' having so often been led on wild goose chases in hunting up phenomena of this class and classes similar to it; and besides I long since had made up my mind to accept no phenomena as genuine when the conditions were not wholly under my control, and these it seemed would not be, especially as they were produced in the dark."

Finally, I was visited in my New York office by a lawyer from Rochester, a man whose integrity and level-headedness are nowhere questioned and who is a lawyer of State-wide reputation. He came to urge me to the same investigation. He told me that he also had known Mrs. French for many years, and had visited her sittings very many times within the past five years; that his partner, now dead, who was also a prominent lawyer and a judge, was thoroughly convinced of her honesty, and was convinced that the phenomena was of spirit origin; he declared that he himself was not a Spiritualist, and hence did not wish his name mentioned in connection with the matter (Is not this enough to awaken a significant smile? That Spiritualism has to be kept skulking; even prominent men who profess to believe, seem to think that their belief must be kept "under the rose"; and for what reason? The same that Nichodemus would have given, had he have been asked why he visited Christ at dead of night. Unpopular.) and finally suggested that he should try to induce this aged woman to come to New York for two weeks, and to be wholly under my direction, for the most thorough investigation that I would care to make. He said it

would be best, however, for him to send with her a lady friend of his, as Mrs. French was now over seventy years of age, and was exceedingly feeble, being afflicted with heart trouble which made it unsafe for her to travel alone. He assured me that she gave no sittings for pay, that she was a refined, well-bred woman, a delicate lady in every sense of the word, and that the friend whom he would send with her as her escort was one that he had known for nearly a quarter of a century, and for whom he would vouch in the strongest possible way.

I finally assented, and the conditions agreed upon were as follows:

1st. No one was to come with Mrs. French except the one lady escort.

2nd. Both ladies should stop at the home that I designated.

3rd. That the sittings should be at such house as I would make known to them after their arrival in New York, and this house was not to be visited by the medium or her friend except during our sittings, nor by any person representing them.

4th. Both women were to follow my directions absolutely while in New York City.

These terms were accepted cheerfully.

The unconditional acceptance of the requirements made of the series of tests a very interesting case.

In the first place there was nothing doubtful in the history of the medium. The testimony from those who knew showed that she was most highly respected, that she had in her favor the verdict of the jury of the vicinage where she had lived over three score years.

This rightly counts for much in one's favor. Among those of whom I have since inquired concerning her history are many who have known her for many years, all at least five years, and one, a man, who had been acquainted with her for over sixty years. She has come of good stock, and that is also an element that counts; she is a Pierrepont, one of the most noted families of the State of New York; in short, she is what the old-fashioned novelists would call high or lady-bred. Those of whom I have inquired—several of whom are not Spiritualists—are unanimous in telling me that they regard her as a person incapable of deception or falsehood.

But in the acceptance of so uncommon a phenomena as that of independent voices, our proof should be of a sort that does not depend at all on the honesty of the medium. People of good reputation, even "Sunday-school men" have been known to lie. Proof that measures up to the standard required must be of a kind that implies an absurdity to suppose the phenomenon is not what is claimed for it.

Still it was a satisfaction to have, for testing, a medium with an unblemished reputation, and to have for point two—a seance-room that made trap-doors and confederates impossibilities. A close friend of mine, a wealthy business man in New York, whom I have known for over thirty years, consented to permit me to use a room in his family apartment for this series of seances. It would be difficult to conceive a better room for this purpose. The windows of the apartment are so arranged that they all open out about fifty feet above the surface of the ground. It is en-

tered by two doors, one from the hall which leads to the elevator, and the other from a fire-escape. The latter at all of our sittings was locked and chained from the inside, and in addition a heavy trunk rested against the door. The hall door was also locked from the inside. At several of the series of sittings I kept the key of this door in my pocket during the entire time. The persons at the seances were this friend, whom we will call Mr. Z., his wife and daughter, and myself, the medium and her escort—these comprised all of the persons who were in the apartment; not a servant, not even an animal pet of any kind was allowed in the apartment during the sittings, except on two occasions. Once we invited an outside friend, and once a friend and his wife.

Mrs. Z has often investigated Spiritualistic phenomena with me during the last twenty years.

I trust my readers will pardon me for digressing at this point a moment in reply to certain critics.

Again and again Spiritualists lose patience with me, one saying very vigorously that I am not a medium and hence can not be competent to judge of mediumship. The conclusion may be sound, but it is a non-sequitur. I believe that I am better fitted to pass judgment on mediumship than a medium can possibly be, who is always supersensitive and often in a trance. John B. Finch used to say "I can not lay an egg, but I am a better judge whether an egg is good or bad than all the hens in the country."

J. R. Francis, the editor of the *Progressive Thinker*, a Spiritualist paper published in Chicago, has done more—I am sure I am well within bounds in saying it

—to free Spiritualism from fraud than any other man in America. Mr. Francis has been pleased in writing recently to declare that he regards me as "An ideal investigator in psychic phenomena," and that he regards my methods as being exact and far-reaching, and altogether fair. I think it well to say these things at this point so as to help lead my readers to free their minds as far as possible from all prepossession against my testimony concerning the extraordinary facts I record in the following pages.

THE TESTING OF INDEPENDENT VOICES

FIRST SITTING (Monday, May 29, 1905)

Mrs. FRENCH and her escort, Mrs. Blank, arrived in New York on Monday evening, May 29, 1905, at about 6 o'clock P. M. At 7.30 they were escorted from the boarding-house by Miss Z to the apartment which I had selected for the seances. The room of the parlor had been fitted up by Mr. Z as a seance-room, simply by arranging the one window to the room so as to exclude the outside light. The size of this room is about twelve feet square. We were seated in a semi-circle around a small table in the order indicated on the diagram.

It was decided that our series of sittings should be held in the evenings, beginning promptly at 7.30 o'clock and that the sittings were to be strictly private.

I dislike the condition of absolute darkness in the production of psychic phenomena, as it immensely increases the difficulty of making absolute tests.

I asked a "Control" at one of our earlier meetings the reason why they could not produce their phenomena without darkness. The answer was "The nature of the phenomena and the physical condition of the medium make any other course impossible. Were the medium in good health we might carefully experiment but now we cannot. To try it would be fatal to the medium. We understand your wishes and the reason for them, but you must believe us when we tell you that you ask what is impossible." This, of course, proved nothing, nor did it help us over the difficulty; yet, it is true, of course, that light has a certain dynamic power. Every second, millions of light waves strike blows where they are admitted, and there are processes in nature from which it must be excluded. As has often been said, the prenatal child matures in absolute darkness, and light must be excluded from the photographic plate.

Electrical Engineer W. W. Bradford of the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company, wrote me, under date of May 23, 1906, that light at times has been found a serious detriment in wireless telegraphy. This fact was first noticed on the occasion of a "voyage made by M. Marconi on the SS. Philadelphia, when he observed that at 500 miles from our station at Poldhu, Cornwall, England, signals received in the day were not appreciably weaker than those received the night before at about 350 miles. So on, however, as the distance exceeded 700 miles, no signals were received during the day, although at night they remained clearly perceptible up to a distance of 2,000 miles."

Prof. Charles Richet, in his address published in the

January (1905) number of the *Aerials of Psychic Science*, says, "Moreover, there is nothing unreasonable in the admission that light may exercise an inhibitory effect upon certain kinds of phenomena. It is often alleged: Darkness is required by spirits only because all kinds of trickery are possible in the dark, but this conclusion is absurd." Pp. 28, 29, Richet further holds that if careful precautions are taken "it is rather foolish to consider worthless all experiments made in the dark."

Absolute darkness calls for special care, but this is not a sufficient reason to refuse to investigate.

This evening before we entered the seance room we observed that Mrs. French was exceedingly deaf, so deaf in fact, that it was difficult to make her hear in conversation, except the voice was considerably raised, and this even when we were removed from her not more than three feet. This fact became an important one in our testings, and hence afterward I sought for fullest confirmation of her deafness by correspondence with several physicians who have attended her—including Dr. Alvin A. Hubbell, of Buffalo, a specialist in eye and ear diseases, recognized as an authority of much weight; especially is his testimony here of special importance as he is not a Spiritualist. The testimony of these various doctors leaves no doubt in my mind as to the genuineness of this serious defect in the hearing of Mrs. French.

We waited in the darkness about twenty minutes, having joined hands. It will be observed by the diagram that Mrs. Blank was placed between Mr. Z. and myself, he having hold of her left hand, and I having

hold of her right hand, and Miss Z. was next to me, and Mrs. Z. next to her. Mrs. French sat at the table directly in front of myself, about four feet distant. The first voice that came was an exceedingly loud masculine voice which, we were informed by Mrs. Blank was that of one of the controls, the Indian Chief Red Jacket—the inevitable Indian! The voice spoke consecutively about ten minutes on the work the “forces” wished to do at this series of meetings—he and those with him. They were exceedingly anxious this voice assured us, to make us know, and make those with whom we came in contact know—not believe, but *know*—that life is continuous.

“We live,” he said, “as real lives—more real—on this side than we did when on earth. The laws that govern life are the same here as with you. In fact everything here is so real that many who come over—die as you call it—do not know for a long time that they are dead. A great part of the work to be done here is to instruct the dead in the true science of progress. To the circles held by this medium we often bring dazed and earth-bound spirits, so as to be able to reach their consciousness through earth surroundings. We and they are then brought to the same place and we then can better make them understand their condition, they at these seances often recognize the voices of those whom in earthlife they knew, and who are in the circle. Many of you people in the flesh think that those who die are done with time and with the earth, but it is still time and it is still earth after we pass over. We have not reached the outlines of time, nor of the material world. Life on both sides of the grave is

part of the same plan and has the same object and is governed largely by the same laws. "Think not that the spirit world has a language of its own? We have a language compared with which the earth languages are blundering. It is heart and mind language. You have what you call telepathy. Do any of you know what that is? When you find that out you will know somewhat of our language. "It may be said that the spirit hears what it wishes to hear, and that it makes its own world. Each spirit is a creator. You have faculties that are now only faintly imagined by you. There is reality. The great Spirit is reality. We cannot explain these things to you. Only the most developed among us know the beginnings of these things. We blunder here as you blunder on the earth, but there is great progress. You must not believe every spirit any more than you believe every man. To some this is a dream world, or rather dream worlds, for there are as many of these worlds almost as there are individuals. But this spirit world is also subject to law. It has its environments and its developments. It has its scientific basis and limitations as you would call it. You must learn to think of this world and the people in it as real."

The various talks of Red Jacket this evening in all must have covered one hour, bearing largely on the main thought running through the above talk. This kind of talk is not new to those who frequently attend the better class of seances. If we can believe these "spirits" death is not a barrier, but a highway, like was the sea to the Vikings. But the thoughts expressed had comparatively little interest to me, for I already

believed these truths, and some of them seemed to be but an echo from my own mind and might have been gathered by any bright medium through reading my mind. What I wished to know was whether this loud voice was produced by that feeble little woman sitting at the table; or whether the voice was produced through extemporized vocal organs by a foreign intelligence—this latter alternative seemed to me extremely improbable. The thought expressed by the other voices during this first evening was all of an exalted kind, and they were always ready to answer the questions which we asked.

Some of the voices were bright and one or two even “snappy” but the voices of Red Jacket and Dr. Hos-sack another of the principal controls, were exceedingly serious, impressing one that their owners were intelligences of great earnestness. It was quickly evident that one of two hypotheses must furnish the explanation of these phenomena. Either they were produced through conscious fraud on the part of the medium, a fraud which has been continued now for more than two score years, or they were produced by foreign intelligences. Let it be remembered that the hands of all in the circle were joined together, except the hands of the medium, I having hold of the right hand of Mrs. Blank and Mr. Z. having hold of her left hand. We frequently talked to Mrs. Blank while the voices were talking. Mrs. Blank was in this way practically eliminated from the problem. The voice of Red Jacket appeared to come from a point some four feet above the head of the medium, and about three feet to the left of her as she sat facing the members of the semi-circle.

After I had fully fixed the locality in my mind, I asked one after another in the circle to locate the point in the room from which the voice came. This I did without telling my own impression. All located it at about the same spot that I did. It must be remembered it is not an easy thing to locate from whence a sound comes in darkness.

Those who have never tried it will find it an interesting experiment. At my request, the voice of Red Jacket changed to different parts of the room. This it did always on the side where the medium was sitting. In reply to a question why he could not come behind those of us who were in the circle and speak, he said: "It is necessary for us to be near the medium, as we draw force from her"—a possible, but an unfortunate necessity. Had the medium stood on a chair or used a long jointed megaphone she could herself have made the voice come from the point whence it seemed to come—that is, if possessed of the power to produce the voice. We sat in the circle about one hour and a half, and as the medium was fatigued by travel, it was suggested by one of the controls that we close the sitting for the evening. Instructions were given us by the controls to have the room on the succeeding nights the same as this night, and to occupy hereafter the same seats. This voice was introduced to us as that of Dr. Hossack, a physician who, we were told, when on earth was a professor in Columbia College, New York City. This was in the early part of the last century. There seemed a trace of Mrs. French's voice in that of Dr. Hossack, but none of us could discover in the voice of Red Jacket any semblance to the exceptionally feeble

voice of Mrs. French. We determined hereafter to watch carefully for this similarity, believing that in it we might get the key to the mystery. Mrs. French is a frail woman of about one hundred and seventeen pounds weight seventy-two years of age, with a pulse that indicates quite a weak and irregular heart. Immediately after the sitting I felt her pulse, and found it sixty-eight to the minute, missing every third or fourth beat. It is not often that one hears two voices more unlike than that of Red Jacket and Mrs. French.

CHAPTER XII

SECOND SITTING

Tuesday, May 30, 1905.

Immediately upon the arrival of Mrs. French and Mrs. Blank, we entered the seance room, and were seated as on the first evening. It will be remembered that neither of these two women was permitted to visit the home of Mrs. Z. except at the time of the sittings. Before the lights were turned out, we all carefully marked the exact location of Mrs. French, and also trained ourselves to locate by the sound the distance and direction of a voice, observing how, when the head is turned in any one direction, the voice seems to proceed from a point toward the side of the room to which the head is turned. In that way a voice can be made to appear as proceeding from a point near the ceiling or a point near the floor or to the right hand or left hand, or back of the one speaking. When Red Jacket's

voice came, he directed, upon my suggestion, that the left hand of Mrs. French and the right hand of Mrs. Z. be joined. This made it more possible for Mrs. Z. to detect any movement of Mrs. French.

The voice of Red Jacket appeared to be of the same *timbre* as the night before, and it seemed equally high above the medium's head, about eight feet from the floor, and toward the sliding door between the two parlors. Our various tests again confirmed our partial conviction of the night before—that Mrs. Blank had nothing whatever to do with these voices. This we proved by talking to her and having her talk to us while the voices were speaking. Our tests also eliminated the theory that Mrs. French left her seat or stood up. All of these possibilities had been thoroughly canvassed by us prior to the coming of Mrs. B. and Mrs. F. this evening.

The theory of a megaphone manipulated by one hand of the medium, and the theory of the medium being an accomplished ventriloquist remained. To test these theories, I requested the medium to talk at the same time Red Jacket talked. If this could be done, it would help us also to locate the whereabouts of the medium when her hand was not being held by Mrs. Z. We were told by one of the voices that we must recognize the possibility of failures in this simultaneous talking because of the complexity and difficulty of the phenomena; "you do not fully realize," said Dr. Hossack, "how exceeding delicate is the organ (medium) we have to work with. She is very frail. Many times we have kept her in her body when even her physicians were sure that she would pass out. She is

of very great importance to us as an instrument, and you must not ask us to take undue risks; and yet on the other hand, we understand perfectly the value of the experiments that you are making, and will do everything in our power to help you make these experiments satisfactory. It is far better for her that she keep quiet while the other voices are talking and are thus drawing upon her strength. We have here a band of medical experts who are watching closely the heart and mind of the medium, and we have also with us a chemical expert and a band of what you would probably call electricians, who are adepts in the manufacture and control of the vital currents.

It may seem to you an easy matter that the medium should talk simultaneously with us; but I assure you it is an extraordinary difficult and dangerous thing; and I again assure you that we have come here to do what is possible to do to satisfy you of the genuineness and the significance of these phenomena." "Yes, yes," said the medium, her "Yes, yes," seemed to be simultaneous with the voice, yet we were not all absolutely certain of this. During the remainder of the evening, a score of times the medium seemed to talk at the same time that did the other voices. Some of us thought yes, others of us were slightly in doubt, believing there was a fraction of a second between the voices. Mrs. Z. who had Mrs. F.'s hand was fairly sure that the voices were simultaneous. To us all it seemed very hard to believe that any human being could have spoken in two different voices so nearly simultaneously and so often, without sometimes using the wrong voice; and also the conviction was constantly growing upon us,

that the feeble, quiet, delicately refined voice of Mrs. F. could not have been produced by the same vocal organs that produced the strong masculine voice of Red Jacket even though assisted by some mechanism. Another point to be tested was whether the defective hearing of Mrs. F. could catch our questions asked of Red Jacket when uttered in low conversational tones. We found that Red Jacket responded to our questions and remarks, no matter how low our tones were. This is a very important factor in the problem of determining the origin of these voices.

As to Dr. Hossack's suggestion that the phenomenon is difficult to produce, when we come to think of it, what reason have we to conclude that the spirit is a simple and easy state of existence? Analogy tells us the contrary. As we progress, the problems of life, of thinking, and of acting grow more and more marvelous and difficult. Water seems to us an easy substance to handle, but as we go upward to hydrogen and oxygen, and then back to atoms and electrons, and the combining of these in many ways—well, who cares for all this? We cut the Gordian knot and say "God directs." Why may it not be there, as here, God works through others these countless marvels, and that among these others are the spirits of the generations that have gone before, and that there as here the doing of things must all be learned in natural ways, and the human faculties developed gradually by exercise, so that there as here are all degrees of perfection and imperfection. The seance lasted this evening two hours, about one hour and a half being taken in talks by some half a dozen different voices. About fifty minutes of this time was

taken in a talk of a most serious sort, by Red Jacket, urging the human race to brotherhood and to labor for others, insisting that each one make his life harmonize with truth, and saying that if we did this, we would be well advanced where we entered the other world, "for" he declared, "all real growth springs out of a desire for the welfare of our fellows."

THIRD SITTING

Wednesday, May 31, 1905.

We added to our circle this evening Miss H. a celebrated author. She sat between Miss Z. and myself. The position of each sitter in the circle was otherwise the same as on the two previous evenings. When Red Jacket's voice came I told him that the theory of the megaphone or speaking trumpet would be used by the critical public as a possible explanation, also that ventriloquism would be urged in explanation, and asked him if he could, to give us some experiments that would exclude both of these hypotheses. His answer was "We will do whatever the strength of the medium will permit." In reply to a question whether he would not tell us his experiences upon his entrance into the other world at death, and also to let us know what his present work was in the spirit world, Red Jacket for fifty-five minutes, as nearly as I could judge by noting the striking of the clock in a near by room, spoke in his usual loud masculine voice.

My purpose in putting these questions to Red Jacket was to have him make a long speech, believing that such an effort would test greatly the physical endur-

ance of Mrs. French, provided she produced the voice. I have had much experience in judging of the carrying capacity of voices, and I have no doubt that the voice of Red Jacket as we listened to it this evening would easily have filled a hall with a seating capacity of two thousand people, while Mrs. F.'s voice, at its loudest, so far as I have heard it, would not fill a parlor twenty feet square.

An address in a loud voice, lasting fifty-five minutes, is an exhausting strain upon the average strong man. Immediately after this speaking I felt Mrs. F.'s pulse, and found that it was as usual, weak and irregular; but not noticeably so beyond what I had found it when she first came into the room. At the beginning of the seance Mrs. Z. was requested by Red Jacket to put her hands upon both of the hands of Mrs. F. This she did throughout the speaking. Under these conditions the megaphone theory became wholly an impossible one. Mrs. Z. knows well the trick of a medium covering both hands with one, so as to make believe that both hands are being accounted for. She assured us that she covered fully each hand of the medium with her hands. Frequently at this sitting Mrs. F. replied in a natural voice, that certainly *seemed* at times simultaneous with Red Jacket's speaking. During the whole of the talking one of Mrs. Blank's hands was held by Mr. Z.'s hand, and the other was held by me. The sitting lasted one hour and forty minutes.

FOURTH SITTING

Thursday, June 1, 1905.

Red Jacket invited me to sit immediately in front of

the little table at which Mrs. F. is accustomed to sit, and to place my hands on her two hands. I separated her two hands about twelve inches, so that the one hand of the medium could not possibly be mistaken for two hands, a trick that I have known to have been played again and again; a trick I myself have played successfully in a dark circle. I put my hands straight out from my body, so as to have the width of my body between the two hands, I again requested Mrs. F. to talk much. Her face could not have been more than twenty-four inches from mine. I could hear her breathe as well as talk. Red Jacket and the other voices talked freely, and Mrs. F. frequently spoke, seemingly at the same time. This test lasted probably ten minutes. It made it impossible for me to hold longer the megaphone theory, and it is difficult to see how it was possible to explain the phenomena by ventriloquism. As nearly as it is possible for the ear to detect, Mrs. F. breathed naturally and talked in her usual low tones, at the same instant that the explosive voice of Red Jacket spoke. I noted particularly the breathing of Mrs. French. Her breath came regular during the sentences of Red Jacket, whether they were long or short.

"Sit back!" Red Jacket suddenly thundered in an explosive voice that seemed to shake the room. I sat back. He afterward explained that the heart of the medium had begun "to thump" and that there was danger to her if the test continued longer. Just before the command, I was told I would feel the passing of a spirit over my face. I felt a cool breath of air. But this could have been produced by the medium, if she had so desired, for if you blow in the face of another

at the distance of fifteen or twenty inches, the air will feel cool.

After I had resumed my seat in the circle there came a strange, laughing voice, very loud, which seemed to come from the neighborhood of the door that led into the hall, or from out in the hall, some six or eight feet distant from the medium. This loud laughing voice was a curious phenomenon, and seemed to startle greatly the medium. The voice came at our request repeatedly, some ten times in all, each laugh averaging possibly a dozen ha ha's, and varying from a deep basso to almost a treble. We were told by Red Jacket that this phenomenon was permitted to show the impossibility "of the medium producing these voices through ventriloquism, as it must be manifest to all here that it is wholly beyond any conceivable compass of a female voice, and especially of so weak a voice as that of Mrs. French.

The location of the voice seemed to change from place to place, at our request, sometimes it sounded as if near the floor and then up high near the ceiling and then about six feet to the left of the medium and then to her right, and then back of her, and then again immediately in front of her. This suggested the art of ventriloquism together with the turning of the head from side to side; but the utter physical weakness of the medium, and her exceptionally feeble voice added to the other tests that we had previously made, seemed almost conclusive—if not altogether so—against this theory. At times when the laughing took place, Mrs. Z. at our request, took hold of both hands of the medium, and Mrs. Z. and I held both hands of Mrs.

Blank, so that the use of a megaphone was again wholly impossible. It is well again to remember that for Mrs. F. to have produced the laugh that we heard, requires us to believe that she possesses extraordinarily well developed lungs and vocal powers, while the truth is, her whole physical build is after a most delicate feeble feminine model. It is as easy to think of a rabbit barking like a bulldog, or bellowing like a bull, as to think of one physically made up as is Mrs. F. producing such a laugh.

It should also be remembered that Mrs. Z. and Miss Z., and Mr. Z. and I are all seasoned investigators. I myself have been at hundreds of seances of all kinds. The reader can take it for granted that not one of our company could be stampeded or excited by the novelty or weirdness of this sort of experiences.

During the evening there were female voices as well as male voices other than that of Red Jacket's. The phenomena continued until 9:30. The theory of collective hallucination it would be very difficult to apply to this series of phenomena. We did not expect the laughing voice; we had not heard that anything of the kind ever occurred at Mrs. French's sittings. On inquiry I found it had not been heard at the sittings in Buffalo or Rochester. We criticized it one to the other, talked about it, and talked to the spirit's personality, and he responded. We talked in a low voice also to the personality and were correctly answered. Mrs. French seemed very much amused at the voice, and often laughed in her quiet way, but so loud that we could all hear her laugh, seeming at the same time that this loud laughter occurred. After listening to it on other

evenings, I have no doubt whatever as to the inapplicability of the collective hallucination theory.

The following question was asked of Dr. Hossack during the evening: Why can not every one be a medium? Why does the spirit-world pass by some of our most excellent people, and choose sometimes unworthy ones for mediums? This was asked also to test the mental caliber of the personality who talked. The answer was: "Can you tell me why it is that copper is better than gold to carry the telegraphic message, or why it is that one material is better than another to hold the picture on the photographic plate, or why it is that radium is to be found in pitchblende and not in silver or gold? It is, my friend, a natural law, and it is not for us to quarrel with natural laws, but to conform to them. It is only by conforming to them that we can get anything from nature." This talk was written down from memory several days afterward and may not be verbally correct, but the thought is. In nearly all other incidents in this series I wrote out the talks the same evening.

FIFTH SITTING

Friday, June 2, 1905

For about forty minutes no voices came. At all of these meetings Mrs. French claims she sees, somewhat over our heads, a string of lights which at first are disconnected, and, when conditions are perfected for the voices to come, the lights join. To-night she reported the lights are coming very slowly and as being loth to connect. The weather conditions were

reported unfavorable, as it was stormy, and the atmospheric pressure heavy. The voices however, finally came. Red Jacket delivered a talk of about half an hour in length, a well sustained and connected talk. His addresses on these occasions are all markedly serious, no jesting or light talking, and they are remarkably free from errors in grammar. Sometimes he will ask for the proper technical word. The following is an outline of his talk as written down the day following by Mr. Z. at my request. It is as unlike as can be to conversations I have had with Mrs. French out of the seance-room:

“Friends I greet you! I wish to call your attention to some of the conditions used by this medium in making communications possible.

“Referring back to many moons ago, or as the pale face says, years ago, after any entrance into spirit-life, a number of earnest spirits anxious to help mortals by imparting more accurate information about the conditions of life here and how life on your side affected life here, held meetings in an assembly-hall here called ‘The Hall of Truth’ we decided to search among mortals if we could find any sensitives suitable for the special purposes that we had in view. We found but three and one of these soon passed over to this side. Later we found that the kind of sensitives we had selected would not answer. We needed a different and higher grade. We made other explorations, testing other mediums. Finally we found the medium we have been using now for so many years.

“You understand the mind works through the brain.

But to the mental force is added what may be called the vital force which is more closely connected with the entire nervous system. These forces produce what may be called electro-magnetism. Follow me closely. Now we have found that there are some mortals born with a double spinal cord. This is very rarely a fact. This second spinal cord generates the force we need for our particular purpose, that is to produce the vibrations which you call 'voices.' So delicate and important is the force produced by this second spinal cord, that a medicine man stands behind this medium all the time we use this force, and brings a pressure to bear at the end of the cord, near the base of the brain. This explains why this medium says she feels a tapping going on at the base of her brain while we are talking."

This curious explanation of the phenomena by Red Jacket was drawn out to a considerable length, and became very technical.

In answer to a question, Dr. Hossack replied that when he was practicing medicine on earth, he read the report of a case of the finding of a double spinal cord. This was found in dissecting the body of a Scotchman in Berlin, Germany. It was then regarded by the medical authorities as a mere freak, and little attention at that time was paid to it. Suddenly in the midst of our talk there broke in a voice with a very pronounced Irish brogue. He seemed to pass to the right and then to the left of the medium again and again, and kept up a rattle of quaint remarks for about five minutes. We were afterward told by Dr. Hossack that the object of this interruption was to get us less intense, so as

to make it easier for the spirits to use the vital forces of the medium and of the members of the circle. This voice had all the quaint humor with which we associate the typical Irishman. It is quite evident, if these phenomena are what they claim to be, that national and individual characteristics perdure beyond the great divide. Of course, the apparent change of location of the voice could be produced by a medium, if tricky, by turning her head as already indicated. The left hand of the medium was held most of the time by the right hand of Mrs. Z. Mrs. Z. reported that the medium seemed to be wholly passive, and more than usually weak—"as weak as a child." I felt the medium's pulse, and it was very weak and very irregular.

Red Jacket's speech is often very picturesque. For example, this evening he was speaking to one in the circle who had just passed through much trouble and was discouraged. He said "Your boat has rocked and your oars fallen out." Of a public character who was known somewhat for the bitterness of his speech, he said, "He shot his words like arrows, and they wounded people. We should give health, not hurt. This is right. Say, friends, it is right."

During the last sitting or two we have directed our attention more to the thoughts uttered by the voices, and have sought to compare them with the thoughts expressed by Mrs. French when not in the circle, striving to judge of the mental caliber of the medium and the mental caliber of the individualities as revealed through these voices. There seems to be as great a difference between the mentality of Red Jacket, Dr. Hossack and two or three others of the individ-

ualities revealed through these strange phenomena as there is in the voices.

It is well constantly to bear in mind that a quick accurate ear is rare. A close observer is not a personage we meet every day.

An investigator of phenomena of this kind should studiously avoid coming to any conclusions during his series of sittings, for an opinion is sure to bias his physical senses. And just here let me whisper to the critic: We should all learn to judge leniently the opinions of others, knowing that our own are sometimes in error. The moral quality of the talks at these seances is an element that is to be considered. Not once at the sittings this week has there been uttered a word of hate, an unclean word, or even a silly word. In fact experiences at a great majority of the seances I have attended with different mediums justify the testimony of Frederick Meyers that the "spirit talks" are as a whole of an exceptionally exalted character.

I find in my note book this sentence which I jotted down from a prayer of Mrs. Pepper given at one of her meetings in Brooklyn, she supposed to be at the time in a trance: "We thank Thee for that divine and wonderful blessing men call birth, and we thank Thee for that equally divine and still more wonderful blessing, which men have misnamed death."

When dozens of sentences of this kind come from the same individual under various circumstances, it becomes increasingly difficult to believe that the soul that utters them is unclean or unspiritual.

The sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth sittings in this series I conclude to omit, as

they contain no particular proof above those I have given: Mrs. French was becoming exhausted under this strain, so that this water test could not be successfully tried. Mr. Funk afterward went to Rochester purposely to get this test. His account of this sitting I will now give:

CHAPTER XIII

A SUPPLEMENTAL SITTING AT ROCHESTER

"Some weeks after Mrs. French and Mrs. Blank returned from New York to their home in Rochester I arranged for a seance in Rochester. My object was if possible, to try again the water test. This arrangement was made through a prominent lawyer in that city, a man well known, but not a Spiritualist. This friend is deeply interested in these investigations of these mysterious phenomena.

We met Mrs. French at a private house of my friend's selecting. I requested Mrs. Blank, who was to be present, to coach Mrs. French in holding two tablespoonfuls of water in her mouth and breathing at the same time through her nostrils. We hoped in this way to allay her nervous excitement which in our previous tests in New York was said to have been largely the cause of the fluttering of her heart during the trial. The conditions were wholly under my control the same as they were in New York. The room was on the second floor, and the keys after locking the two doors, I

placed in my pocket. I bought the matter for coloring the water on my way to the house, and brought with me my own measuring glass. No one but myself knew the color of the liquid I would use. I took into the seance-room the glass tumbler containing the two tablespoonfuls of water, and then placed in the glass the coloring-matter, and then permitted the medium to taste it, so as to relieve her mind as to any thought or any fear of it being unpleasant.

The plan to be pursued by us I outlined as follows: A candlestick with a candle in it was placed on a table at the side of one of the members of the circle, and when the control gave the word, that gentleman who is a dentist in Rochester, was to light the candle; then I was to give to the medium the liquid in the presence of all the members of the circle, holding the glass in my hands, the medium was to take all of the liquid in her mouth; I was to place the empty glass on the floor between my feet; the light was then to be extinguished, and immediately thereafter Red Jacket, if possible, was to speak in his natural voice, and then the candle was to be relit and the colored water was to be ejected from the mouth of the medium into the measuring glass which I was to hold, and we were all to see whether the same amount of liquid had been emptied from the medium's mouth into the glass as was in it at the beginning of the seance, and whether it was of the same color.

The four persons—besides my friend, Mrs. Blank, Mrs. French and myself—who made up the circle were all intimately known to my friend.

The plan of procedure as described above was carried out to the letter, and *Red Jacket spoke within a*

minute after the liquid had been taken into the medium's mouth and the light extinguished.

It should be remembered that I held the glass to her mouth before the light was extinguished, and after the voice came the candle was relit and the medium emptied the liquid from her mouth into the measuring glass which I held in my hand. The liquid emptied into the glass I found to be the exact amount that I gave her, and was in the judgment of us all of the same color.

This test was a perfect one with only *a single drawback* which did not occur to me I am sorry to say, until after I left the house. A very sly tricky person might have had an empty bottle or glass concealed about her person and, as soon as the light was extinguished, emptied the liquid into this glass, and then after the speaking and before the light was relit, put the liquid back into her mouth, "Had one of our number held both of the medium's hands while the room was in darkness, the test would have been complete in every part as far as I can see. This concealed-glass theory is an exceedingly unlikely one under all of the conditions, but it must be regarded as a *possible* one, and should be guarded against in any future tests. At some future sitting I will try to guard against this unlikely, but possible hypothesis.

'Tis true it is a pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true. I regret to record this oversight. Because here is a straw that opponents to Spiritualism will grasp at; but to the honest investigator I do not see how so grave a reflection as this can be cast upon the character of Mrs. French: for Mrs. French would from the nature of the case have to be the prime actor in this case of fraud.

Take the whole history I have recorded in regard to her mediumship; her character in fine everything as detailed Mr. Moore's letter and all, and see if it is possible to entertain a thought that this woman—seventy-two years of age—would resort to subterfuge like this. The cogent reason that she is not guilty of this *possible* exception is that there was no occasion for it. She was charging no fee. These manifestations had been produced through her organism for over a score of years, and it is one of the most irrational conclusions that irrational man can arrive at, that she would keep this deception up all of this time “just for fun.” This is my verdict.

Here is Mr. Moore's Affidavit:

“Secretary of the Rochester Art Club:

“I have attended the sittings with Mrs. French of this city from time to time during the past twenty years. I am positively convinced of the genuineness of the manifestations of spirit-voices which occur through her mediumship.

“I have, during these years, tried by every device that human ingenuity could suggest, to discover fraud on the part of Mrs. French but without avail.

“I have known Mrs. French, during some of her seances when I happened to sit next to her, to place her mouth on the back of my hand and keep it there while Red Jacket—her principal control, was speaking.

“And I have many times heard Mrs. French conversing while Red Jacket's or some other control's voices have been addressing the circle.

A. W. MOORE.”

Sworn to before me, this 19th day of April, 1906.

MARY JEANETTE BALLANTYNE.

Notary Public.

It is plain that Mr. Moore has had a much wider range of experience with Mrs. French, than did Mr. Funk. The former's reaches back over a period of twenty years, when this medium would have been much younger and stronger than when investigated by Mr. Funk. And while I own that Mr. Funk has aimed to be honest and fair, and it is evident from his language that he thinks the medium honest and that the voices were those of discarnate intelligences: yet where absolute proof is necessary with no possible loophole that incredulity can crawl through; I think Mr. Moore's letter and affidavit furnishes incontrovertible proof. This coupled with Mr. Funk's account, makes what I consider an excellent chapter for the truth seeker:

CHAPTER XIV

Among the things I have read under the head of "Spiritual Phenomena" I do not recall anything that has more profoundly impressed me than the account of Sir William Crooks' investigations upon this momentous subject. His standing in the scientific world, titled as he is, "Sir William Crooks, F. R. S., was editor of the London *Quarterly Journal of Science*; discoverer of the sodium amalgam process; inventor of the radiometer ortheoscope; gold medalist of the French Academy of Sciences, and president of the

British Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Society for Psychical Research."

The circumstances and opportunities by which Mr. Crooks has been favored in his researches, and the straightforward manner in which he has recorded what he has witnessed, makes it incumbent upon me to place him among the contributors to this work.

Mr. Crooks has investigated many phases of mediumship (as is shown in his work), but his investigation in the phase of "materialization," with Miss Florence Cook as medium, impresses me as being the part best calculated to reach the mentality of humanity in general.

MISS FLORENCE COOK'S MEDIUMSHIP

[The following letters appeared in the Spiritualistic journals at the dates which they bear.]

"Sir—It has been my endeavor to keep as clear of controversy as possible, in writing or speaking, about so inflammatory a topic as the phenomena called Spiritual. Except in very few cases, where the prominent position of my opponent would have caused my silence to be ascribed to other than real motives, I have made no reply to the attacks and misrepresentations which my connection with this subject has entailed upon me.

"The case is otherwise, however, when a few lines from me may perhaps assist in removing an unjust suspicion which is cast upon another. And when this other person is a woman—young, sensitive, innocent—it becomes especially a duty for me to give the weight of my testimony in favor of her whom I believe to be unjustly accused.

“Among all the arguments brought forward on either side touching the phenomena of Miss Cook’s mediumship, I see very few *facts* stated in such a way as to lead an unprejudiced reader, provided he can trust the judgment and veracity of the narrator, to say, ‘Here is at last absolute proof.’ I see plenty of strong assertion, much unintentional exaggeration, endless conjecture and supposition, no little insinuation of fraud, and some amount of vulgar buffoonery; but no one has come forward with a positive assertion, based upon the evidence of his own senses, to the effect that when the form which calls itself ‘Katie’ is visible in the room, the body of Miss Cook is either actually in the cabinet or is not there.

“It appears to me that the whole question narrows itself into this small compass: Let either of the above alternatives be proved to be a fact, and all the other collateral questions may be dismissed. But the proof must be absolute, and not based upon inferential reasoning, or assumed upon the supposed integrity of seals, knots and sewing; for I have reason to know that the power at work in these phenomena, like Love, ‘laughs at locksmiths.’

“I was in hopes that some of those friends of Miss Cook, who have attended her *seances* almost from the commencement, and who appear to have been highly favored in the tests they have received, would, ere this, have borne testimony in her favor. In default, however, of evidence from those who have followed these phenomena from their beginning nearly three years ago, let me, who have only been admitted, as it were at the eleventh hour, state a circumstance which came

under my notice at a *seance* to which I was invited by the favor of Miss Cook, a few days after the disgraceful occurrence which has given rise to this controversy.

"The *seance* was held at the house of Mr. Luxmore, and the 'cabinet' was a back drawing-room, separated from the front room in which the company sat by a curtain.

"The usual formality of searching the room and examining the fastenings having been gone through, Miss Cook entered the cabinet.

"After a little time the form of Katie appeared at the side of the curtain, but soon retreated, saying her medium was not well, and could not be put in sufficiently deep sleep to make it safe for her to be left.

"I was sitting within a few feet of the curtain, close behind which Miss Cook was sitting, and I could frequently hear her moan and sob, as if in pain. This uneasiness continued at intervals nearly the whole duration of the *seance*, and *once, when the form of Katie was standing before me in the room, I distinctly heard a sobbing, moaning sound, identical with that which Miss Cook had been making at intervals the whole time of the seance*, come from behind the curtain where the young lady was supposed to be sitting.

"I admit that the figure was startlingly life-like and real, and, as far as I could see in the somewhat dim light, the features resembled those of Miss Cook; but still the positive evidence of one of my own senses is that the moan came from Miss Cook in the cabinet, whilst the figure was outside, is too strong to be upset by a mere inference to the contrary, however well supported.

“Your readers, sir, know me, and will, I hope, believe that I will not come hastily to an opinion, or ask them to agree with me on insufficient evidence. It is perhaps expecting too much to think that the little incident I have mentioned will have the same weight with them that it had with me. But this I do beg of them: Let those who are inclined to judge Miss Cook harshly suspend their judgment until I bring forward positive evidence which I think will be sufficient to settle the question.

“Miss Cook is now devoting herself exclusively to a series of private *seances* with me and one or two friends. The *seances* will probably extend over some months, and I am promised that every desirable test shall be given to me. These seances have not been going on many weeks, but enough has taken place to thoroughly convince me of the perfect truth and honesty of Miss Cook, and to give me every reason to expect that the promises so freely made to me by Katie will be kept.

“All I now ask is that your readers will not hastily assume that everything which is *prima facie* suspicious necessarily implies deception, and that they will suspend their judgment until they hear from me again on this subject. I am, etc.

“WILLIAM CROOKES,

“20 Mornington Road, London.

“Feb. 3, 1874.”

SPIRIT-FORMS

“In a letter which I wrote to this journal early in February last, speaking of the phenomena of spirit-

forms which have appeared through Miss Cook's mediumship, I said, 'Let those who are inclined to judge Miss Cook harshly suspend their judgment until I bring forward positive evidence which I think will be sufficient to settle the question. Miss Cook is now devoting herself exclusively to a series of private seances with me and one or two friends. . . . Enough has taken place to thoroughly convince me of the perfect truth and honesty of Miss Cook, and to give me every reason to expect that the promises so freely made to me by Katie will be kept.'

"In that letter I described an incident which, to my mind, went very far towards convincing me that Katie and Miss Cook were two separate material beings, when Katie was outside the cabinet, standing before me, and I heard a moaning noise from Miss Cook in the cabinet. I am happy to say that I have at last obtained the '*absolute* proof' to which I referred in the above-quoted letter. I will, for the present, pass over most of the tests which Katie has given me on the many questions when Miss Cook has favored me with seances at this house, and will only describe one or two which I have recently had. I have for some time past been experimenting with a phosphorus lamp, consisting of a 6-oz. or 8-oz. bottle, containing a little phosphorized oil, and tightly corked. I have had reason to hope that by the light of this lamp some of the mysterious phenomena of the cabinet might be rendered visible, and Katie has also expressed herself hopefully as to the same result.

"On March 12th, during a seance here, after Katie had been walking amongst us and talking for some

time, she retreated behind the curtain which separated my laboratory, where the company was sitting, from my library, which did temporary duty as a cabinet. In a minute she came to the curtain and called me to her, saying, 'Come into the room and lift my medium's head up; she has slipped down.' Katie was then standing before me, clothed in her usual white robes and turban head-dress. I immediately walked into the library, up to Miss Cook, Katie stepping aside to allow me to pass. I found Miss Cook had slipped partly off the sofa, and her head was hanging in a very awkward position. I lifted her on to the sofa, and in so doing had satisfactory evidence, in spite of the darkness, that Miss Cook was not attired in the 'Katie' costume, but had on her ordinary black velvet dress, and was in a deep trance. Not more than three seconds elapsed between my seeing the white-robed Katie standing before me and my raising Miss Cook on to the sofa from the position into which she had fallen.

"On returning to my post of observation by the curtain, Katie again appeared, and said she thought she would be able to show herself and her medium at the same time. The gas was then turned out, and she asked for my phosphorous lamp. After exhibiting herself by it for some seconds, she handed it back to me, saying, 'Now come and see my medium.' I closely followed her into the library, and by the light of my lamp saw Miss Cook lying on the sofa just as I had left her. I looked round for Katie, but she had disappeared. I called her, but there was no answer.

"On resuming my place, Katie soon reappeared and told me that she had been standing close to Miss Cook

all the time. She then asked if she might try an experiment herself, and taking the phosphorous lamp from me she passed behind the curtain, asking me not to look in for the present. In a few minutes she handed the lamp back to me, saying she could not succeed, as she had used up all her power, but would try again some other time. My eldest son, a lad of fourteen, who was sitting opposite me, in such a position that he could see behind the curtain, tells me he distinctly saw the phosphorous lamp apparently floating about in space over Miss Cook, illuminating her as she lay motionless on the sofa, but he could not see anyone holding the lamp.

“I pass on to a seance held last night at Hackney. Katie never appeared to greater perfection, and for nearly two hours she walked about the room, conversing familiarly with those present. On several occasions she took my arm when walking, and the impression conveyed to my mind that it was a living woman by my side, instead of a visitor from the other world, was so strong, that the temptation to repeat a recent celebrated experiment became almost irresistible. Feeling, however, that if I had not a spirit, I had at all events a *lady* close to me, I asked her permission to clasp her in my arms, so as to be able to verify the interesting observations which a bold experimentalist has recently somewhat verbosely recorded. Permission was graciously given, and I accordingly did—well, as any gentleman would do under the circumstances. Mr. Volakman will be pleased to know that I corroborate his statement that the ‘ghost’ (not struggling, however) was as material a being as Miss Cook herself. But

the sequel shows how wrong it is for an experimenter, however accurate his observations may be, to venture to draw an important conclusion from an insufficient amount of evidence.

"Katie now said she thought she would be able this time to show herself and Miss Cook together. I was to turn the gas out, and then come with my phosphorous lamp into the room now used as a cabinet. This I did, having previously asked a friend who was skillful in shorthand to take down any statement I might make when in the cabinet, knowing the importance attaching to first impressions, and not wishing to leave more to memory than necessary. His notes are now before me.

"I went cautiously into the room, it being dark, and felt about for Miss Cook. I found her crouching on the floor. Kneeling down, I let air into the lamp, and by its light I saw the young lady dressed in black velvet, as she had been in the early part of the evening, and to all appearances perfectly senseless; she did not move when I took her hand and held the light quite close to her face, but continued quietly breathing.

"Raising the lamp, I looked around and saw Katie standing close behind Miss Cook. She was robed in flowing white drapery, as we had seen her previously during the *seance*. Holding one of Miss Cook's hands in mine, and still kneeling, I passed the lamp up and down, so as to illuminate Katie's whole figure, and satisfy myself thoroughly that I was looking at the veritable Katie whom I had clasped in my arms a few minutes before, and not the phantasm of a disordered brain. She did not speak, but moved her head and

smiled recognition. Three separate times did I carefully examine Miss Cook crouching before me, to be sure that the hand I held was that of a living woman, and three separate times did I turn the lamp to Katie and examine her with steadfast scrutiny, until I had no doubt whatever of her objective reality. At last, Miss Cook moved slightly, and Katie instantly motioned me to go away. I went to another part of the cabinet, and then ceased to see Katie, but did not leave the room till Miss Cook woke up, and two of the visitors came in with a light.

“Before concluding this article I wish to give some of the points of difference which I have observed between Miss Cook and Katie. Katie’s height varies; in my house I have seen her six inches taller than Miss Cook. Last night, with bare feet, and not ‘tiptoeing,’ she was four and a half inches taller than Miss Cook. Katie’s neck was bare last night, the skin was perfectly smooth, both to touch and sight, whilst on Miss Cook’s neck is a large blister, which, under similar circumstances, is distinctly visible and rough to the touch. Katie’s ears are unpierced, whilst Miss Cook habitually wears earrings. Katie’s complexion is very fair, while that of Miss Cook is very dark. Katie’s fingers are much longer than Miss Cook’s, and her face is also larger. In manners and ways of expression there are also many decided differences.

“Miss Cook’s health is not good enough to allow of her giving more of these test seances for the next few weeks, and we have, therefore, strongly advised her to take an entire rest before recommencing the experimental campaign which I have sketched out for her, and

the results of which I hope to be able to record at some future day.

“20 Mornington Road, N. W.

“March 30th, 1874.”

CHAPTER XV

THE LAST OF KATIE KING

“Having taken a very prominent part of late at Miss Cook’s seances, and having been very successful in taking numerous photographs of Katie King by the aid of the electric light, I have thought that the publication of a few of the details would be of interest to the readers of *The Spiritualist*.

“During the week before Katie took her departure she gave seances at my house almost nightly, to enable me to photograph her by artificial light. Five complete sets of photographic apparatus were accordingly fitted up for the purpose, consisting of five cameras, one of the whole plate size, one half plate, one quarter plate, and two binocular stethoscopic cameras, which were all brought to bear upon Katie at the same time on each occasion on which she stood for her portrait. Five sensitizing and five fixing baths were used, and plenty of plates were cleaned ready for use in advance, so that there might be no hitch or delay during the photographic operations, which were performed by myself, aided by one assistant.

“My library was used as a dark cabinet. It has folding doors opening into the laboratory; one of these doors was taken off its hinges, and a curtain suspended

in its place, to enable Katie to pass in and out easily. Those of our friends who were present were seated in the laboratory, facing the curtain, and the cameras were placed a little behind them, ready to photograph Katie when she came outside, and to photograph anything also inside the cabinet, whenever the curtain was withdrawn for the purpose. Each evening there were three or four exposures of plates in the five cameras, giving at least fifteen separate pictures at each seance; some of these were spoiled in developing, and some in regulating the amount of light. Altogether I have forty-four negatives, some inferior, some indifferent, and some excellent.

"Katie instructed all the sitters but myself to keep their seats and to keep conditions, but for some time past she has given me permission to do what I liked—to touch her, and to enter and leave the cabinet almost whenever I pleased. I have frequently followed her into the cabinet, and have sometimes seen her and her medium together, but most generally I have found nobody but the entranced medium lying on the floor, Katie and her white robes having simultaneously disappeared.

"During the last six months, Miss Cook has been a frequent visitor at my house, remaining sometimes a week at a time. She brings nothing with her but a little hand-bag, not locked; during the day she is constantly in the presence of Mrs. Crookes, myself, or some other member of the family, and, not sleeping by herself, there is absolutely no opportunity for any preparation even of a less elaborate character than would be required for enacting Katie King. I prepare

and arrange my library myself as the dark cabinet, and usually, after Miss Cook has been dining and conversing with us, and scarcely out of our sight for a minute, she walks direct into the cabinet, and I, at her request, lock its second door, and keep possession of the key all through the seance; the gas is then turned out, and Miss Cook is left in darkness.

“On entering the cabinet Miss Cook lies down upon the floor, with her head on a pillow, and is soon entranced. During the photographic seance, Katie muffled her medium’s head up in a shawl to prevent the light falling upon her face. I frequently drew the curtain to one side when Katie was standing near, and it was a common thing for seven or eight of us in the laboratory to see Miss Cook and Katie at the same time, under the full blaze of the electric light. We did not on these occasions actually see the face of the medium because of the shawl, but we saw her hands and feet; we saw her move uneasily under the influence of the intense light and we heard her moan occasionally. I have one photograph of the two together, but Katie is seated in front of Miss Cook’s head.

“During the time I have taken an active part in these seances Katie’s confidence in me gradually grew, until she refused to give a seance unless I took charge of the arrangements. She said she always wanted me to keep close to her, and near the cabinet, and I found that after this confidence was established, and she was satisfied I would not break any promise I might make to her, the phenomena increased greatly in power, and tests were freely given that would have been unobtainable had I approached the subject in another manner.

She often consulted me about persons present at the seances, and where they should be placed, for of late she had become very nervous, in consequence of certain ill-advised suggestions that force should be employed as an adjunct to more scientific modes of research.

“One of the most interesting of the pictures is one in which I am standing by the side of Katie; she has her bare feet upon a particular part of the floor. Afterwards I dressed Miss Cook like Katie, and placed her and myself in exactly the same position, and we were photographed by the same camera, placed exactly as in the other experiment, and illuminated by the same light. When these two pictures are placed over each other, the two photographs of myself coincide exactly as regards stature, etc., but Katie is half a head taller than Miss Cook, and looks a big woman in comparison with her. In the breadth of her face, in many of the pictures, she differs essentially in size from her medium, and the photographs show several other points of difference.

“But photography is as inadequate to depict the perfect beauty of Katie’s face as words are powerless to describe her charms of manner. Photography may, indeed, give a map of her countenance; but how can it reproduce the brilliant purity of her complexion, or the ever-varying expression of her most mobile features, now overshadowed with sadness when relating some of the bitter experiences of her past life, now smiling with all the innocence of happy girlhood when she had collected my children round her and was amusing them by recounting anecdotes of her adventures in India?

“‘Round her she made an atmosphere of life;
 The very air seemed lighter for her eyes,
 They were so soft and beautiful and rife
 With all we can imagine of the skies;
 Her overpowering presence made you feel
 It would not be idolatry to kneel.’

“Having seen so much of Katie lately, when she has been illuminated by the electric light, I am enabled to add to the points of difference between her and her medium which I mentioned in a former article. I have the most absolute certainty that Miss Cook and Katie are two separate individuals so far as their bodies are concerned. Several little marks on Miss Cook’s face are absent on Katie’s. Miss Cook’s hair is so dark a brown as almost to appear black; a lock of Katie’s which is now before me, and which she allowed me to cut from her luxuriant tresses, having first traced it up to the scalp and satisfied myself that it actually grew there, is a rich golden auburn.

“One evening I timed Katie’s pulse. It beat steadily at 75, whilst Miss Cook’s pulse a little after was going at the usual rate of 90. On applying my ear to Katie’s chest I hear a heart beating rhythmically inside, and pulsating more steadily than did Miss Cook’s heart when she allowed me to try a similar experiment after the seance. Tested the same way, Katie’s lungs were found to be sounder than her medium’s, for at the time I tried my experiment Miss Cook was under medical treatment for a severe cough.

“Your readers may be interested in having Mrs. Ross Church’s and your own accounts of the last ap-

pearance of Katie supplemented by my own narrative, as far as I can publish it. When the time came for Katie to take her farewell I asked that she would let me see the last of her. Accordingly, when she had called each of the company up to her and had spoken to them a few words in private, she gave some general directions for the future guidance and protection of Miss Cook. From these, which were taken down in shorthand, I quote the following: 'Mr. Crookes has done very well throughout, and I leave Florrie with the greatest confidence in his hands, feeling perfectly sure he will not abuse the trust I place in him. He can act in any emergency better than I can myself, for he has more strength.' Having concluded her directions, Katie invited me into the cabinet with her, and allowed me to remain there to the end.

"After closing the curtain, she conversed with me for some time, and then walked across the room to where Miss Cook was lying senseless on the floor. Stooping over her, Katie touched her, and said: 'Wake up, Florrie; wake up! I must leave you now.' Miss Cook then awoke, and tearfully entreated Katie to stay a little time longer. 'My dear, I can't; my work is done. God bless you,' Katie replied, and then continued speaking to Miss Cook. For several minutes the two were conversing with each other, till at last Miss Cook's tears prevented her speaking. Following Katie's instructions, I then came forward to support Miss Cook, who was falling on the floor, sobbing hysterically. I looked round, but the white-robed Katie had gone. As soon as Miss Cook was sufficiently calmed, a light was procured and I led her out of the cabinet.

“The almost daily seances with which Miss Cook has lately favored me have proved a severe tax upon her strength, and I wish to make the most public acknowledgment of the obligations I am under to her for her readiness to assist me in my experiments. Every test that I have proposed she has at once agreed to submit to with the utmost willingness; she is open and straightforward in speech, and I have never seen anything approaching the slightest symptom of a wish to deceive. Indeed, I do not believe she could carry on a deception if she were to try, and if she did, she would certainly be found out very quickly, for such a line of action is altogether foreign to her nature. And to imagine that an innocent schoolgirl of fifteen should be able to conceive and then successfully carry out for three years such a gigantic imposture as this, and in that time should submit to any test which might be imposed upon her, should bear the strictest scrutiny, should be willing to be searched at any time, either before or after the seance, and should meet with even better success in my own house than at that of her parents, knowing that she visited me with the express object of submitting to strict scientific tests—to imagine, I say, the Katie King of the last three years to be the result of imposture does more violence to one’s reason and common sense than to believe her to be what she herself affirms.

“It would not be right for me to conclude this article without also thanking Mr. and Mrs. Cook for the great facilities they have given me to carry on these observations and experiments.”

The reader will observe that these seances took place

in the seventies and bear the date of 1878. Since that time it has been rumored that Dr. Crookes has denounced spiritual manifestation altogether. Here is what he says, in part, in 1898, twenty years later:

“SIR WILLIAM CROOKES ADDRESSES THE BRITISH
ASSOCIATION

“At the annual assembly of that most representative body, the British Association, at Bristol, in 1898, Sir William Crookes again declared himself upon the subject of his researches.

“Since his first utterance, in 1874, many doubters had arisen who had declared that the scientist had swerved from his former course and no longer believed in the genuineness of the manifestations witnessed. His words before the British Association leave no doubt in the mind.

“He said: ‘No incident in my scientific career is more widely known than the part I took many years ago in certain psychic researches. Thirty years have passed since I published an account of experiments tending to show that outside our scientific knowledge there exists a Force exercised by intelligence differing from the ordinary intelligence common to mortals. This fact in my life is, of course, well understood by those who honored me with the invitation to become your President. Perhaps among my audience some may feel curious as to whether I shall speak out or be silent. I elect to speak, although briefly. To ignore the subject would be an act of cowardice—an act of cowardice I feel no temptation to commit.

“I have nothing to retract. I adhere to my already published statements. Indeed, I might add much thereto. I regret only a certain crudity in those early expositions which, no doubt justly, militated against their acceptance by the scientific world. My own knowledge at that time scarcely extended beyond the fact that certain phenomena new to science had assuredly occurred, and were attested by my own sober senses, and, better still, by automatic record.

“I think I see a little farther now. I have glimpses of something like coherence among the strange elusive phenomena; of something like continuity between those unexplained forces and laws already known. This advance is largely due to the labors of another Association of which I have also this year the honor to be President—the Society for Psychical Research.

“SIR WILLIAM CROOKES.”

CHAPTER XVI

As corroborative evidence that St. Paul was a Spiritualist, and when he said, “Be ye not deceived, for whatsoever a man sow that shall he reap,” is true, I conclude to give you an extract from a book written by Beals E. Litchfield, entitled “Forty Years’ Inter-course with the Denizens of the Spirit Spheres.”

Mr. Litchfield was a farmer who lived in the western part of New York State, and died, according to my recollection, about five years ago.

The publisher’s date of his book is 1893.

“‘In the garden of life’s farming,
 ’Tis best that we should know,
 That when it comes to reaping,
 We must gather what we sow.’

“During the last six months a change has taken place. When the phenomena has been about to occur the writing has been at first presented rather indistinctly, and it would gradually become more illegible until it would entirely disappear; still, the story would be continued by mental impression, and I soon found that I could exchange thoughts with those intelligences almost as readily as though we were both in the material form. And I have often given those spirits who came to me in their sorrow such council as I deemed they needed to benefit their poor sorrowing souls. I will give the reader two examples which will illustrate the condition of many who have passed the mystic river, and are now dwellers in some of the lower realms of spirit-life.

“Not many months since a spirit came to me who was an entire stranger to me, and commenced telling me of his being a prisoner among the Indians, and some scenes of which he told me were indeed sad and sorrowful. After he had related several of those incidents I stopped him, and said: ‘Now, dear spirit, before you proceed any farther, I want you to answer me a few questions.’ This he appeared willing to do.

“‘What is your name?’

“‘You may call me Jo. Rattler, though that is not my real name. I do not desire at this time to give my true name.’

“‘From your story thus far, it appears to me that you were not a very wise or good man in earth-life; and you are now about the same in spirit-life. Is that correct?’

“‘Yes, it is correct.’

“‘What, then, is your object in coming to me and relating the story of your earth-life?’

“‘I found I could impart to you my thoughts so readily that I wanted to get you interested in my story, and then get you, if you would, to write it up and get it published, for it is altogether a wonderful experience.’

“‘What is your object in wanting it written and published?’

“‘If you knew my whole story, I could tell you so you would better understand me; but I think there are some yet living in earth-life who would recognize me, and some of them—in fact, *none* of them, knew what-ever became of me.’

“‘Do you desire to bless or curse humanity?’

“‘I have no desire to curse humanity, and I do not know that I have the power to bless anyone.’

“‘Do you know there are wise and good spirits in spirit-life who are continually working to bless mankind, and that you can become like them in knowledge if you so desire?’

“‘I have heard there were such spirits, but it has always seemed to me as though I could never be only what I now am.’

“‘Have you any desire to know more than you now know? to be better than you now are? and to arise above your present condition of life, and dwell in a

more beautiful place than you now occupy?' 'I should be glad to do so if I could.' After giving him as good advice as I could, I said: 'I have some dear friends in spirit-life who are ever willing to help those who through unfortunate conditions have found themselves in an unhappy condition, and I think they will willingly receive you as their student if you desire them to do so.'

"He replied: 'It will be a great joy to me if they will do so. But how about my story?' I said: 'If you go with them you can tell them your story, and if they think best, and advise me to write it, then if you will give it to me in full, I will write it after I get through with my present work.'

"He willingly and anxiously made the arrangements, and I telegraphed to my brother Elisha in spirit-life to come.* In a moment or two my brother Levi came.

* Spirit telegrams are sent by the power of the will. He said 'that brother Elisha, to whom I sent the dispatch, was occupied with an important matter, and had asked him to come in his stead.' I gave my spirit-brother an introduction to the spirit with me, and told my brother the spirit's desire, which appeared to please my spirit-brother; and the two spirits left my room and departed together, and Jo. Rattler has not visited me since to my knowledge. But I have briefly heard from him, so in my next illustration I shall mention.

"A few weeks after the above-recorded interview and conversation, I awoke one night, and the following scene and conversation occurred. When I first awoke

I was aware that some invisible being was with me who desired to communicate. He soon commenced giving me a history of his earth-life. He was very particular in giving the minutæ, until I told him to stop, as I did not wish to hear any more. He seemed much affected and begged me to hear him through. He said he had been directed to me by a spirit whom I had before helped to start upon a higher and better pathway; and that he had come to me, hoping that after I had heard his story I might give him advice that would help him out of his sorrowful and unhappy condition.

“From his description of the spirit who had induced him to visit me, I felt sure it was Jo. Rattler, the spirit I have referred to in my previous illustration. I then told him to proceed as briefly as possible; that I would listen to his story of sorrow and help him if I could. For which he thanked me very kindly. I will here give a brief sketch of his story as he gave it to me.

“He said his name was John Whitman; that he had formerly resided in the State of Kansas; that he was a well-to-do farmer until the trouble occurred which he was about to relate; that at that time there was a young man, I think he said a nephew of his, but of that I am not sure, but he was a relative who had given him much trouble, and one time the young man had struck him, for which he had given the young man a severe whipping. After the occurrence of that event he offered the young man a sum of money (he did not say how much) if he would leave the country and never return. The young man accepted the offer; received

the money, and left the place. For several years he did not hear from him, but after several years' absence he returned. After his return the young man sent Mr. Whitman a note requesting a private interview with him. Mr. Whitman sent him word in reply that at a certain time he might visit him at his house, and he would give audience to him alone. At the appointed time the young man came, knocked at the door, which Mr. Whitman opened and let him in.

"The spirit continued: 'As soon as I had closed and locked the door, the young man drew a pistol to shoot me. As soon as I saw the movement I drew a pistol and shot him. He fell wounded, but then made an effort to shoot me, when I struck him with my pistol on his head and killed him. Soon my son came, and I told him what I had done. I had not intended to kill him, neither had I desired to do so; but who would believe me, now that the deed was done? My son and I counceled together, and the gallows seemed inevitable unless my deed could be kept a secret. My son and myself buried the body that night, and I burned the clothes that I wore at the time, for there was blood upon them. The young man was missed by the neighbors; while some thought he had again left the country, I felt sure, that with some, suspicion of foul play rested upon me. I was unhappy. My trouble seemed more than I could endure. At length I concluded to sell my property, leave the country, go to the far West, and settle in some place where I was entirely unknown, and where I could live secluded from all my former acquaintances. Accordingly, I disposed of all my effects, and with all my family moved to a far

Western place and started a new home. We had not been there long when I chanced to meet a man whom I had known in Kansas, and I then knew that my location was known, and that I was liable to be arrested at any time. I had deeply regretted my foolishness in trying to keep the matter a secret. I also deeply regretted that I had not at first told the truth, and given myself up for trial. At length my mental sufferings became so great that I determined to return to Kansas, tell the truth, give myself up, and beg for mercy from the court. For that purpose I bade adieu to my family and new home, and started on my return trip to Kansas. While passing through Nebraska I was met by an officer and arrested on a charge of murder. I told the officer my story, and he said if I had told that story in the first place it might have cleared me, but after the course I had taken, it would not do, and of course my story would not be believed. I also felt that to be true. I quickly drew from my pocket a pistol, put the muzzle to my head and shot myself. To my great surprise *I still lived*. Though my body I left as a lifeless lump of clay, yet, I found I had another body that could think, feel and suffer as keenly as my earth body, and, worst of all, I found that I was still the same man, that by shooting myself I had not got away from myself, but memory and conscience were still a part of me, and as active as ever. For two years or more I have been wandering around my native town and other places seeking in vain for peace of mind to allay my mental suffering. I thought when I put the pistol to my head that the bullet would bury me in oblivion, and my sorrow would cease. I had no previous

belief in a future life, but too late I found my mistake. I was not at heart a willful murderer, but I was not a good man. I had done many things which I knew at the time to be wrong, and my conscience was daily accusing me of every wrong deed. Memory has been my accusing foe, and conscience is and has been my relentless judge, and from this court of justice I cannot find any way of escape. I have met in spirit life many others in the same or similar conditions of life, but all were unhappy, and none know how or where to obtain relief. And when that spirit told me that you gave him advice that helped him much, it gave me the very first hope I had found of ever obtaining a release from my unhappy condition, and I immediately came to you and the result of my visit you know. And now if you can give any advice that will help me out of my unhappy condition, I shall be very thankful for your kindness.

“The following conversation then passed between us. I inquired if he could fully understand me in our manner of conversing? He said he could. Said I, ‘Since you left the earth form have you left the earth at any time, or seen any place where spirits abide except on the surface of the earth?’ Answer: I have not and do not know that there is any other place. Question: ‘Have you met in spirit life the young man whom you so unfortunately sent to spirit life?’ Answer: I have not, but it seems to me that every one I meet looks upon me as a murderer and I am very miserable. I desire to be a better man than I have been; and, if possible, again to be a man among men.

“Question: Are you aware that all mankind are

brothers and sisters, and that holding such relationship to each other makes it sure to follow that if we wrong another the result of that wrong deed falls with the heaviest force upon our own head? And the sorrow and unhappiness that you now suffer, and which you have been suffering, is the result, or in other words, the legitimate fruit of the wrong which you have done?

“Answer: I have never viewed human life in that light; it is to me a new idea. Said I, such is indeed the law of life; hence a person in any condition of life cannot afford to do wrong. But after the wrongs are done, as in your case, and thousands of other cases, the question presents itself thus: ‘How can we escape the fires of sorrow that burn within our own soul?’ We answer, not through ‘vicarious atonement, or the blood of Jesus’; for each one must atone for his own wrongs. Now, my dear unfortunate brother, what you need to know is how you can atone for your wrong deeds. And when you learn the way, then put it in practice; and through your own effort and energy, helped as you may be by good spirits, atone to those you have wronged, and thus seek salvation from your present internal hell. My advice is for you to seek and find the spirit of the young man whom you sent prematurely to spirit life. Tell him of the sorrow for the deed. Tell him you will do all in your power to atone to him for the great wrong you did him. Tell him you desire to be truly his friend, and you desire his friendship. And seek to develop within your own being, love and fraternal friendship for all mankind. That at first may not be easily accomplished. But you must remember that you are a progressive being, and contain within your being in-

finite possibilites. And as with the rose and lily, growth and unfoldment are necessary to bring out and unfold the higher and nobler qualities of your divine and immortal selfhood. Thus through the gradual unfoldment of your own inherent qualities, you may in time rise to a grander, more glorious, and a happier condition of life than you can now conceive of. I ask you as my brother, do you now desire to enter upon such a course of life? If you do, I think I can get you started in that direction. I have friends in spirit life who are good, noble, and true, who are ever willing to give light to the blind, feet to the lame, joy to the sorrowing, and help the unfortunate wanderer to climb the stairway of progress to higher conditions of mental and spiritual unfoldment."

"He replied: 'If I could enter upon such a course, I would be a faithful student and a thankful spirit.'

"I then sent a mental telegram to my brother Elisha in spirit life to come. He soon came, joyous and happy, I introduced the two spirits to each other, and told my brother the desire of Mr. Whitman, and my brother said he would with pleasure help the poor sorrowing, pilgrim wanderer up the pathway of life to higher fields of thought and unfoldment. Then my brother said to me, 'I thank you, dear brother, for calling me to give light to this poor, sorrowful brother. You need not fear to call me at any time when you find a poor brother who needs our assistance and we will respond to your telegram at any time.'"

[Our daughter came at the same time, and requested me to call her if I found any poor, wandering spirits who

needed her assistance. And in a few days after that a poor, sorrowing female spirit came to me seeking for help. My daughter quickly responded to my telegram, and took the poor wanderer under her kind care, and, I presume, to a brighter home in the higher realms of spirit life.] My spirit brother and his pupil left me. In a few weeks the spirit of Mr. Whitman returned to me rejoicing, and said he wanted to thank me for starting him on the road of progress. He told me that my spirit friends had helped him to find the young man in spirit life whom he had so deeply wronged, and he had done all in his power to atone for his crime. But in reviewing the causes that led to the unhappy and fatal results of the young man's transition.

It occurred in this way: In earth life each one was jealous of the other's honesty of purpose, and each one was a little afraid of the other. Hence each one prepared himself with a pistol for self-defense. When Mr. Whitman admitted the young man into his room and locked the door, he only intended to keep out intruders. But the young man thinking the door was locked to prevent his escape, drew his pistol to defend himself in case of an emergency, not intending to shoot Mr. Whitman unless in self-defense. Mr. Whitman, misjudging the young man's intention, made the fatal shot, and a vast amount of sorrow and suffering for both of them was the inevitable result. "But" Mr. Whitman continued, "we have now laid aside all feeling of ill will. We have again shaken hands in friendship, and we have decided to help each other up and along the pathway of life, even in the spirit spheres. And I sincerely hope our friendship may be as lasting as time, and as dur-

able as eternity. I have many other wrongs to atone for, but none as bad as that. But my effort to atone for those wrongs brings me a degree of happiness which I did not expect to realize, when in my sorrow I first visited you. We shall sometime meet again. Till then adieu."

"I have thus given the reader two examples to illustrate the condition of thousands of poor earth-bound spirits, who are compelled to remain on earth for years after they have laid off the earth-form, and to sigh and weep, sorrow and suffer, as the result of their conditions when in earth-life.

"BEALS E. LITCHFIELD."

CHAPTER XVII

There are two books extant which bear these titles respectively "Rending the Vail" and "Beyond the Vail." These two books I consider the most wonderful volumes that have ever appeared upon earth; and to those who are truly seeking for a revelation from the other shore, I do not know of any literature "under the sun" which contains internal evidence more convincing than does these two books.

What may give you some idea of these wondrous volumes, I will quote the title page of the first named book and will then give the reader a few random selections from this book, as it is exceedingly difficult to make a choice where the whole is of such a supramundane order. The source of the contents of this book, "Rending the Vail" is testified to by eight of the sitters, that is they make oath before a "Notary Pub-

lic" declaring its source as set forth to the best of their knowledge and belief. The title page of this book.

"The Mystic Quadruple Interrogatory. How? What?? Whence??? Whither???? Concerning the Existence of Man, and all Things, and all Being, and all Life, so far answered by the contents of this Book, as to suggest for an appropriate Title, to wit:

Rending The Vail.

This volume is a compilation by J. H. Nixon of Psychic Literature, mostly given by Spirits through and by means of

Full-Form Visible Materializations. At Seances of a certain Psychic Research Society known as the

Aber Intellectual Circle. The Medium being, William W. Aber. It is believed, that Rending The Vail

Is the only book in the world as a Scientific Treatise of Phenomenal Spiritualism, claiming its principal matter to be uttered by Excarnate Human Spirits while in condition of Visible Reincarnate Form."

These Seances were held at Spring Hill, Kansas.

These selections can give you but a vague idea of the significance of this book in its entirety. The messages written by these materialized Intelligences ranged from four hundred to eight or nine hundred words per minute.

This book with the seance records one hundred and twenty-six in all, and the written and vocal communications make a book of something over five hundred pages. The other book "Beyond the Vail" is about the same in size.

There was quite a number of Spirits engaged in this work.

I will give a selection from Spirit Dr. Reed the chemical control as the first. With this heading, "It Were Better That the Child be Taught Spiritualism, than Trained to Lie, Cheat and Steal from the Public.

"Friends I wish I had the power to teach Spiritualism universally. I believe nine-tenths of the crimes of your calendar would never occur if the truths of Spiritualism were universally known; and I believe if the little street urchins were taught that they were ever guarded by some loved one who has passed out, instead of being trained to lie, cheat and steal from the public, how different their lives would be. Could these poor little outcasts be taught to realize that their loved ones wept over every wrong act, their lives of toil would not seem such a sacrifice, but they would gladly toil for the praise of those they loved.

"I am acquainted with one spirit in particular, who passed out in a tenement of one of your large cities.

"This woman was, by nature and education, fitted for the life of a lady; but, after her husband passed away, leaving her with one child to care for (a little boy of four), she met with one reverse after another, and her fair-weather friends passed her by without a word of recognition. She was too proud to apply at her old home for work and made the mistake of going to a large city to seek employment.

"She struggled for six years to support herself and child, but her naturally frail constitution gave way under the pressure of hard work and ill food.

"This woman knew nothing of Spiritualism, but was a devoted Christian and had trained her little boy in that faith. He was a bright sensitive child, and adored

his mother. At last her overworked frame refused to move any more; and with her child's hands clasped within her own, she bade him ever to remember Jesus was watching over him and would care for him. With a tender kiss of farewell on her lips, her spirit took its flight, and the poor broken-hearted child was left in the world alone!

"Days and weeks went by, and still his prayers were not answered, and the trusting child began to think, mamma must have trusted Jesus too much, for he don't seem to help me as she said he would.

"How much better it would have been if that mother could have told her darling that his mother would always watch over him and care for him, even though she was called to another home. That child would have known that his mother would have kept her word. That would have been a lesson he could have understood. If he could have realized that his mother's pure spirit was watching over him daily, he would not have lost faith in mankind, and would not be wearing the dress of a criminal as he is to-day. He would have loved his mother as he did before she passed away. Even now, the memory of her love helps to brighten her dreary path.

(Signed) "REED."

This spirit gave seventy-six writings. I can give you but one of them together with his last effort: his benediction:

Friends, it is glorious to be able to thus stand between the denizens of the two worlds, and, in behalf of

the spirit realms, proclaim and demonstrate to you mortals the continuance of life to a home beyond the tomb; to let you know that death is but a change of homes—a moving out of one house of habitation into a more delightful house—a more enduring home.

Oh, what a thrill of joy runs along the corridors of the “many mansions” as the immortal occupants thereof learn of the advancement among earth’s people, of this superlative truth! “May you receive the teachings and knowledge with benefit to yourselves and teach the good news to inquiring minds.”

“REED.”

This Dr. Reed, when in the mortal form practiced medicine in St. Louis, Missouri, and passed to spirit life some twenty years ago.

A selection from the writings of William Denton, “who was born at Darlington, England, about May 2, 1823, and came to America in early life. For a few years he taught school, and then went to lecturing. He became distinguished as a geologist and naturalist, and while in search of data for science and natural history, on the island of New Guinea, in 1883, lost his life to the physical. He was the author of several books.

HIS NO. 46 WRITING MAN’S RESISTANCE TO NEW SCIENCE OR RELIGION

“Man has always, as far back as we can learn, resisted the onward march of any new science or religion for fear some of the teachings of the new science or

religion may come in conflict with some of his own cherished ideas.

“Prove that he is in error and he will attack you with arguments based on that very error. But, one after another, they fall from him as the grain falls before the scythe of the reaper; and he will be just as stubborn in defense of the new as he was of the old.

“Man should be ready at any time to investigate anything new that comes before him; for if it be an untruth, he need have no fear that the truth will go down before it, and if it be a truth, he should investigate and known its teachings thoroughly.

“As to some other of your questions, we have said before in this circle that the God of the Christians is a myth. They regard God as a personal being and when they do this they limit his power. God is in and a part of everything that exists. The God principle would be a better name than God; for the God principle is the good within any living thing. It is just as impossible to see God as it is to see gravitation. You can witness the effect of any force, but you never see the force itself. You know messages are sent every hour, streets are lighted, and cars drawn by the force you call electricity but no one has been able yet to define electricity. No one can tell you whether it is a solid or a fluid.

“Man, in his ignorance, supposed God was a person, a being, little higher than the human; but at this age in the world's history it is time for man to reason and know for himself that God is spirit, and not a personal being seated on a throne.

(Signed) DENTON.”

I am approaching the limit but I feel that this work would be incomplete were I to omit William Denton's concluding oration. This spirit contributed for this book "Rending the Vail" forty-nine writings, and fifty-one orations. I give place for but one of these writings and this is his concluding effort in oratory.

ORATION No. 51

"Spirit Denton, in visible form, stands before us, and with more than ordinary vigor and voice volume, through the trumpet, said: 'Good-evening, friends. I see the gentleman [Mr. Pratt] has no subject for me to-night. Well, that is all right. I want you to say to him (his hearing was at times defective) that, as the evening shades are lengthening very rapidly, and soon, according to the course of nature, his work on earth must close; that his friends on this side are glad to say to him that his determination to use his remaining physical force and finance in the good work of promulgating this grand, glorious, and ennobling truth gives them joy, and is building for him an habitation of which he will rejoice when he reaches this fair country. There is no other way that he could have labored in his declining years that would have brought him so great reward.

" "I want to say to all of you that this is a glorious work in which you mortals are joining with us now. Such a work has never before been accomplished; denizens of immortal glory so far rolling back the veil that separates between the two worlds as for the spirits to stand clothed again as you did know them before their

transition; and, in attitude perceptible to your sight and hearing and understanding, write to you, and talk to you, and illustrate to you of the evidences of continued existence, and of the inexpressible beauty and grandeur of the immortal home of the soul.

“When you review and re-review our work, you will continually be more and more surprised at how it is builded. You will see every point well guarded against the most pointed darts of criticism.

“You will see that we begin with the simplest lessons and gradually take the student, step by step, along the whole psychic course until, when he is versed in our course, he will see an invulnerable structure.

“I want to say to you that we have a work here that will stand, and all the powers of the opposition to this sublime truth shall not avail to blot it out. Notice our work of art. Here comes a form—you see the form. The form has power of speech to the capacity of any of you. You hear its wonderful words. You, at the same time, see it stand before you in the attitude and expression of the highest eloquence. You see it writing, and you find it has written a wonderful writing. You find its penmanship a marvel in swiftness of execution, construction, and scientific instruction. The form gives you its name, and while you are beholding the form, another form is seen by you.

“This other form says he is sketching the likeness of the former one, and with incredible swiftness executes a portrait and hands it to you; and lo! you behold the picture of the person the first form said himself to be.

“Where on earth is the sane-minded person to

gainsay or that is able to tear down our syllogism? No, friends, ignorance may throw mud, but reason, enlightened reason, must surrender to the psychic conclusion.

“‘I want to say to you that there is art in the spirit-world. Art beyond the loftiest imagination of any intelligence while tabernacling in the tenement of clay.

“‘Could you conceive for one moment the most gifted artist in the mortal, after reaching his highest attainments on the earth-plane, transplanted to a school where no hindering environments are found, and continue in that school under the tutorship of high-spiritual intelligences for a thousand years, you might be able to form some faint conception of what an artist is in the spirit-world; but it is not for the little children of earth, while in the mortal, to even dream of the grandeur of the artistic designs of high-spiritual intelligences.

“‘Oh, my friends! you will find this the real side of life. And you will find that, while all of the earth is transient and passeth away, the unspeakable glory, the arts, the sciences, the architecture of the spirit-world are enduring! I want to say one word more now. Soon most of you, and but a little while at farthest, you will all pass to our side of life. We know the obstacles in your way. We know what some of you have had to endure and overcome. When it is yours to move out of the earthly house, then your friends gone before with outstretched hands will meet you at the gates and hold them ajar: while you, with your wealth of spirituality, pass into the eternal light

and glory of the spirit-world, and joyous happy throngs will be your escort to your several homes in spirit-spheres, which you will find your course of life on earth to have embellished accordingly for you.

“‘Work faithfully on; for, as you thus build, so will be your home here—builded by your own earth career.

“‘WILLIAM DENTON.’”

A selection or two more from another contributor to this book, “Rending the Veil”: Thomas Paine, the patriot in the time of our Revolutionary struggle.

WRITING No. 1

“Friends, there is not an orthodox religious newspaper in the world that will publish the facts concerning Spiritualism. Yet in the face of facts like these, certain Christians have told you that you must believe the Bible or be damned eternally.

“The Christians are still worshiping a savage God, whom they suppose to be the parent of a merciful and benevolent son, who died to save the world; but the lingering superstitions of the savage mind still haunt their imaginations, and they regard every manifestation from the spirit-world to be of Satan; but the conceit of their half-deluded minds is a striking comment upon the efficacy of their system to save themselves from the imaginary wrath of an angry God.

“They are never at peace long enough to have a generation born free of the taint of blood and strife; and their religious tenets all reflect the mental bias

of the people that have never conceived of any greater powers of peace and benevolence of men than that instilled by this angry Divine Creator.

"This abhorrent doctrine is still taught in your temples of learning, and ghastly symbols stand before your altars.

"Think such people should be conceited enough to claim the final destiny of the human race to be at the disposal of their (angry) God is not surprising, for they have attempted to conquer and possess the whole earth as their personal possessions, and such minds are ever ambitious to be rulers in the world eternal.

"The Christian world is not spiritual, but material; and its ideas of the life eternal are nearly all erroneous.

(Signed) "THOMAS PAINE."

WRITING No. 4

"What myths and what superstitions have sprung from the religious world! How it has cursed the race! Its pathway is written in blood, and it forges manacles for those who dare to question. Banish this God, and you will have liberty. Do away with the fables about an immortal soul, and the world will no longer be slaves to the fear of death.

"You have had enough of theories and myths and superstitions. What you want is demonstration.

"Friends, if mankind during all these ages had not been so amazingly narrow in their mental grasp, hiding, as it were, the universe by holding a single book too near the eyes; if they had dared to cultivate their

reason and their spirit perceptions, they could have gleaned the rich things there are now being revealed here to-night—they would have omitted that which was false and immoral.

(Signed) "T. PAINE."

WRITING No. 5

"Friends, examine your Bible and see the mass of confused and contradictory nonsense deluding as to the teachings of the one you call Jesus. See the ridiculous light in which his character is represented, with qualities neither befitting a man or God, both of which he is represented to be; and his coming to the world in a most ridiculous and unnatural manner—assuming to have a mission which he never performed, to have power that he never exercised in defense of himself or his friends; and also assuming to be sent to people who would not receive him, and preaching his mission to those to whom he was not sent.

"And, again, he proposes to be a man of peace, and that all mankind, by him, shall be blessed; yet he says that he was not sent to 'restore peace but the sword.' If you will examine all of the writings of the New Testament, you will find them to be a compilation of contradictory statements, predictions, absurdities and mythical nonsense, too disgusting for good intelligent persons to read and give credence.

"There is one exception I will make as regarding my statements, and that is the doctrine of a future life for man. That is actually true, as I have found it since coming here into spirit-life.

“For eighteen hundred years the minds of men have been overspread with a gloomy, destructive superstition that has been entailed upon them. The Christian dogmas have enveloped the people with the grossest and darkest of ignorance, and it has prevented them from making any advances—moral or intellectual. And nearly all those who have endeavored to enlighten and liberate their fellow-men have been crushed out of the physical existence.

“Bloody wars have deluged your earth in nearly every country, as the result of the damnable doctrines that have been preached to mankind in the name of Jesus Christ.

(Signed) “PAINE.”

ORATION No. 9

*Thomas Paine Is Back Here to Tell to the World
What He Knows Now*

“Good-evening, friends. I am glad to meet you here in this way. Our glorious work is moving on, and I am truly glad that it is progressing with such rapid strides throughout the world. No discovery in the domain of science ever yet made greater progress among the people in a single half-century than the great scientific fact of a demonstrable future for man has since its enunciation, less than fifty years ago.

“Yet strange indeed is it that so great a boon to the race must fight its way everywhere.

“Fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, children, brothers, and sisters, everywhere mourning, sorrowing, weeping, wailing, as they look into the desolate grave or

behold the empty chair! Will not hear the good news, will not look as the angels draw the veil aside.

"And when the white-robed kindred 'over there' would draw near, would sing again the old home refrain, they are driven away; the gentle caressing of an angel mother is denounced as the scheming of some diabolical fiend.

"Oh, friends! when I look upon the floods of tears that might be dried away, when I behold the millions of sorrowing hearts that might be comforted, but for the intervention of a designing priesthood who live fat upon the sorrowings of desolate hearts, my soul sickens and determines me to go on with the warfare of breaking the fetters that bind so many millions of precious souls to a mercenary sacerdotalism founded on the fables of an imaginary God.

"This God, through the priesthood as his medium, has in all ages fought with fire and sword, shot and shell, gibbet and guillotine, prison and proscription, slang and slander, the advocates of the advent into your earth among the children of men of anything calculated to lessen the iron grip that the priest has had upon men and women.

"They would murder a Bruno for daring to think for himself.

"They would lead upon the scaffold an innocent Quaker woman because it was reported than an angry God had said, 'Suffer not a witch to live.'

"In the infancy of astronomy its advocates must recant or burn at the stake, because this imaginary leader of the priesthood had been reported as saying something about the four corners of the earth.

"The great science of phrenology was tabooed because it was at variance with the supposed teaching of their supposed God; and geology, too, must be scoffed because it teaches that, instead of the six days of creation, millions of ages were consumed.

"Thus, step by step, science has shown that the theological ideas of God are false, and that what the theologians have heretofore taught to be the true God have not been and are not God at all, but merely false or ignorant conceptions of the true God.

"Oh, if my orthodox friends were here to-night, I would scorch them to the very quick; only desiring, however, to have them exchange their remaining ignorance for eternal truth.

"I do not come back here for nothing, nor to advocate theories; but to tell you what I know."

Thomas Paine remarked in one of his orations that if he did not speak of the Bible some might doubt it being Thomas Paine. He seems to not have forgotten his work while in the mortal, both as a patriot and liberator from the bonds of bigotry.

St. John said, in concluding his gospel, "That if all Christ said during his three years' ministry had been recorded, that he supposed the world could not contain the books that should be written."

I could hardly make as extravagant an assertion as this in regard to the Spiritual Phenomena that has taken place since 1848, but the amount I have here given would be but a drop in the bucket comparatively; and the evidence is rapidly accumulating.

CHAPTER XVIII

I had expected this oration from Thomas Paine to conclude my work along this line—of phenomena Spiritual. But just recently there came to hand an article by William T. Stead, editor the *Review of Reviews*—a publication put out in Great Britain—and upon reading it, thought I must expand my book-covers sufficient to give it place.

“HOW HE KNOWS THE DEAD RETURN—RECORD OF
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

“Cecil Rhodes once told me that early in life he had devoted much thought to the question whether or not there was a God. He came to the conclusion that there was a 50 per cent. chance that there was a God, and therefore that it was a matter of the first importance to ascertain what God wanted him to do. In like fashion, I would ask the reader to consider whether or not there is any proof that the conscious life of his personality will persist after death. If he examines the evidence he will probably come to the conclusion that there is a certain per cent. chance that such is the case. He may put it at 50 per cent., at 90 per cent., or at 10 per cent., or even at 1 per cent. of chance that death does not end all. In face of the fact that the immense majority of the greatest minds in all ages have firmly believed that the personality survives death, he will hardly venture to maintain that he is justified in asserting that there is not even a 1 per cent. chance that he will not go on living after his body has re-

turned to its elements. Of course, if he should be absolutely convinced that not even such an irreducible minimum of a chance exists that he may be mistaken, if he thinks that he knows he is right and that Plato and the Apostle Paul were wrong, I beg him to read no further. This article is not written for him. I am addressing myself solely to those who are willing to admit that there is at least an off chance that all the religions and most of the philosophies—to say nothing of the universal instinct of the human race—may have had some foundation for the conviction that there is a life after death. Put the percentage of probability as low as you like, if there be even the smallest chance of its truth, it is surely an obvious corollary from such an admission that there is no subject more worthy careful and scientific examination. Is it a fact, or is it not? How can we arrive at certainty on the subject? It may be that this is impossible. But we ought not to despair of arriving at some definite solution of the question one way or the other, until we have exhausted all the facilities for investigation at our disposal. Nothing can be less scientific than to ignore the subject and go on living from day to day in complete uncertainty whether we are entities which dissolve like the morning mist when our bodies die, or whether we are destined to go on living after the change we call death. Assuming that I carry the reader so far with me, I proceed to ask what kind of evidence can be produced to justify the acceptance of a belief in a persistence of personality after death, not as a mere hypothesis, but as an ascertained and demonstrable fact?

“The recent applications of electricity in wireless

telegraphy and wireless telephony, while proving nothing in themselves as to the nature or permanence of personality, are valuable as enabling us to illustrate the difficulties as well as the possibilities of proving the existence of life after death.

“In order to form a definite idea of the problem which we are about to attack, let us imagine the grave as if it were the Atlantic Ocean, as it appeared to our forefathers before the days of Christopher Columbus. In order to make the parallel complete, it is necessary to suppose that the Atlantic would only be traversed by vessels from east to west, and that the ocean currents or strong easterly gales rendered it impossible for any voyager from Europe to America to return to the Old World. We shall thus be able to form a simple but perfectly clear conception of the difficulties which I am about to discuss.

“If Christopher Columbus after discovering America had been unable to sail back across the Atlantic, Europe would after a time have concluded that he had perished in an ocean which had no further shore. If innumerable other voyagers had set out on the same westward journey, and had never returned, this conviction would have deepened into an absolute certainty. Yet Christopher Columbus and those who followed him might have been living and thriving and founding a new nation on the American continent.

“What would have happened in those circumstances? In all probability the faith even of the most ardent believers in the reality of Columbus' great vision would have grown dim. If it did not altogether die out, it would be due to the fact that from time to time, in

the dreams of the night, their friends saw him alive and well in a strange new world. But everything would be shadowy and unreal as a dream.

"Now let us transport ourselves from the time of Columbus to our own day. We must assume that the original physical impossibility of crossing the Atlantic from west to east still continues. But in the intervening centuries the men who had crossed from east to west have increased and multiplied, and have built up a great nation with an advanced civilization on the American continent. Like us, they discover telegraphy; like us, they invent and use the telephone.

"After a time they discover and apply the principle of wireless telegraphy, and after that they perfect the wireless telephone. The terrors of the unknown would not daunt forever the intrepid spirits of European explorers. A ship or ships would be equipped to cross the Atlantic. When their crews and passengers landed on the further shore, they would discover, to their infinite amazement, not only that a vast continent existed within five days steam from Liverpool, but that those who were thought to have perished had founded a great commonwealth in the New World. What would immediately happen?

"The newcomers, finding themselves unable to return, would at once endeavor to utilize all the resources of modern science to enable them to communicate their great discovery to the Old World. They would endeavor to perfect and extend the use of wireless telegraphy, so as to enable them to flash the good news to their friends on the European shore. At first they would fail from the lack of any receiving station on

this side. But after a while, by some happy chance, a wireless message from America might be caught on some seacoast Marconi station.

"When that message arrived, how would it be received? In all probability it would be fragmentary, incoherent, and apparently purposeless. It would be set down to some practical joker or regarded as some random message sent out from somewhere in Europe. And so for a long time the attempt to communicate information would fail. After an interval a more coherent message would arrive. Efforts would be made to answer, but the replies might not arrive when anyone was in attendance at the other side; the instruments might not be properly attuned, the messages might be so mutilated as to be unintelligible. A few cranks who had never lost the faith, traditional and dim, that there was a world beyond the seething waste of waters, would go on experimenting, wasting time and money, and exposing themselves to the ridicule of the scientific world.

"At last, after innumerable disappointments, it is possible that the captain of the last exploring expedition might succeed in getting through a message, clear, direct to the point, such as this: 'From Captain Smith, of the *Resolute* SS., to Lloyds, London. Alive and well. Discovered new world filled with descendants of Christopher Columbus and his men.'

"What would follow the receipt of such a marconigram? It would probably arrive so many years after the expedition had sailed that no one would at first remember who Captain Smith was. Whether records were looked up, and the existence of the ship and its

commander recalled, there would be some sensation, and a good deal of discussion. Efforts to reach the unknown land would be renewed, but the majority of practical, common-sense men of the world would regard the message as a practical joke, while the men of science would prove to their own complete satisfaction the absolute impossibility of any such new world existing, and *a fortiori*, of any such message being authentic.

“But after a time more messages would come. Some method would be discovered of dispatching replies and receiving answers. At last the scientific world would wake up to the recognition of the fact that a *prima facie* case had been made out for the strange, the almost incredible phenomena that seemed to point to the possibility that there was another world beyond the Atlantic, and that its inhabitants could by means of wireless telegraphy communicate with Europe. The difficulties they would encounter would be the identical difficulties which confront us in our quest for certainty as to life after death. But, with patience and perseverance and careful allowance for the obstacles in the way of trans-oceanic intercourse, the existence of the American continent would in the end be established as firmly as I believe the existence of the Other World is very soon about to be established beyond all question or cavil.

“I will now leave the illustration and address myself directly to an explanation of the evidence which has convinced me of the reality of the persistence of personality after death. I may make the prefatory remark that I have what is called the gift of automatic handwriting. By that I mean that I can, after

making my mind passive, place my pen on paper, and my hand will write messages. The next question is whether this system of automatic telepathy—which corresponds to wireless telegraphy on land—can be extended to those who have crossed the river of death—an extension which corresponds to the transmission of marconigrams across the Atlantic.

“Upon this point I will again relate my own experience. I had two friends, who were as devoted to each other as sisters. As is not unusual, they had promised each other that whichever died first would return to show herself to the other in order to afford ocular demonstration of the reality of the world beyond the grave. One of them, whose Christian name was Julia, died in Boston shortly after the pledge was given. Within a few weeks she aroused her friend from her sleep, in Chicago, and showed herself by her bedside, looking radiantly happy. After remaining silent for a few minutes, she slowly dissolved into a light mist, which remained in the roof for half an hour. Some months after, the friend in question came to England; she and I were staying at Eastnor Castle, in the west of England, when Julia came back the second time. Her friend had not gone to sleep. She was wide awake, and again she saw Julia as distinct and as real as in life. Again she could not speak, and again the apparition faded away.

“Her friend told me about the second visit, and asked me if I could get a message from Julia. I offered to try, and next morning before breakfast, in my own room, my hand wrote a very sensible message, brief, but to the point. I asked for evidence as to the

identity of the transmitter; my hand wrote, 'Tell her to remember what I said when last we came to Minerva.' I protested that the message was absurd. My hand persisted and said that her friend would understand it. I felt so chagrined at the absurdity of the message that for a long time I refused to deliver it. When at last I did so, her friend exclaimed, 'Did she actually write that? Then it is Julia herself, and no mistake.' 'How,' I asked, bewildered, 'could you come to Minerva?' 'Oh,' she replied, 'of course you don't know anything about that. Julia shortly before her death had bestowed the pet name of Minerva upon Miss Willard, the founder of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and had given her a brooch with a cameo of Minerva. She never afterwards called her anything but Minerva, and the message which she wrote with your hand was substantially the same that she gave me on the last time when Minerva and I came to bid her good-by on her deathbed.' Here was a slight mistake: Minerva had come to her, instead of Julia going to Minerva, but otherwise the message was correct.

"I then proposed that I should try for more messages. My friend sat at one end of a long table, I sat at the other. After my hand had written answers to various questions, I asked Julia, as another test of her identity, if she could use my hand to call to her friend's memory some incident in their mutual lives of which I knew nothing. No sooner said than done. My hand wrote: 'Ask her if she can remember when we were going home together when she fell and hurt her spine.' 'That fills the bill,' I remarked, as I read out the message, 'for I never knew that you had met with

such an accident.' Looking across the table, I saw that my friend was utterly bewildered. 'But, Julia,' she objected, 'I never hurt my spine in my life.' 'There,' said I, addressing my hand reproachfully, 'a nice mess you made of it! I only asked you for one out of the thousand little incidents you both must have been through together, and you have gone and written what never happened.'

"Imperturbably, my hand wrote, 'I am quite right; she has forgotten.' 'Anybody can say that,' I retorted; 'can you bring it back to her memory?' 'Yes,' was the reply. 'Go ahead,' I answered; 'when was it?' Answer: 'Seven years ago.' 'Where was it?' 'At Streator, in Illinois.' 'How did it happen?' 'She and I were going home from the office one Saturday afternoon. There was snow on the ground. When we came opposite Mrs. Buell's house she slipped her foot on the curbstone and fell and hurt her back.' When I read these messages aloud, her friend exclaimed, 'Oh, that's what you mean, Julia! I remember that quite well. I was in bed for two or three days with a bad back; but I never knew it was my spine that was hurt.'

"I need not multiply similar instances. The communication thus begun has kept up for over fifteen years. I have no more doubt of the existence and the identity of Julia than I have of the existence of my wife or my sister.

"Here we had the appearance of the deceased in bodily form twice repeated on fulfillment of a promise made before death. This is followed up by the writing of messages, attested first by an allusion to a pet name

that seemed to reduce the message to nonsense, and, secondly, by recalling to the memory of her friend with the utmost particularity of detail an incident which that friend had forgotten. No other medium was concerned in the receipt of these messages but myself. I had no motive to misrepresent or invent anything. As my narrative proves, I was skeptical rather than credulous. But things happened just as I have put them down. Can you be surprised if I felt I was getting into communication with the Beyond?

“It will be said by some of those who will not give me the lie as to the accuracy of the foregoing narrative, that it does not carry us beyond telepathy from the living. This may be admitted, if telepathy from the unconscious mind is regarded as an actual fact. In this case the unconscious mind telepathed what the conscious mind of the transmitter had entirely forgotten. The hypothesis of telepathy from the unconscious mind of the living can be invoked to account for almost any message said to be transmitted by the dead. But there is one class of messages for which telepathy from incarnate minds, conscious or unconscious, cannot account. That is the class of messages which relate neither to past nor present events, but which foretell an event or events which have still to happen.

“Julia, on the very day on which she gave me the test messages recorded above, made a prediction, which was given me not really as a prediction, but as a friendly warning intended to save another friend from making engagements which she would not be able to keep, as at a certain time she would be three thousand miles away, in England. My friend laughed the warn-

ing to scorn. The prediction was twice repeated, and both times treated with contempt. Engagements were entered into which, when the time came, had to be cancelled, because my friend found it necessary to go to the distant place which Julia had named, and as Julia had predicted.

“It will be objected that the prophecy in this case may have helped to bring about its own fulfillment. Let us admit that for the sake of argument. The same objection cannot be urged against the next item of evidence I am about to produce. Some years ago I had in my employment a lady of remarkable talent, but of a very uncertain temper, and of anything but robust health. She became so difficult that one January I was seriously thinking of parting with her. Julia wrote with my hand, ‘Be very patient with E. M.; she is coming over to our side before the end of the year.’ I was rather startled, for there was nothing to make me think that she was likely to die. I said nothing about the message, and continued her in my employ. It was, I think, about January 15 or 16, when the warning was given.

“It was repeated in February, March, April, May, and June, each time the passage being written as a kind of reminder in the body of a longer communication about other matters. ‘Remember E. M. is going to pass over before the end of the year.’ In July, E. M. inadvertently swallowed a tack. It lodged in her appendix, and she became dangerously ill. The two doctors by whom she was attended did not expect her recovery. When Julia was writing with my hand, I remarked, ‘I suppose this is what you foresaw when

you predicted E. M. would pass over.' To my infinite surprise, she wrote, 'No; she will get better of this. But all the same she will pass over before the year is out.' E. M. did recover suddenly, to the amazement of the doctors, and was soon doing her usual work. In August, in September, in October, and in November, the warning of her approaching death was each month communicated through my hand. In December, E. M. fell ill with influenza. 'So it was this,' I remarked to Julia, 'that you foresaw.' Again I was destined to be surprised, for Julia wrote, 'No; she will not come over here naturally. But she will come before the year is ended, she coughed badly, and was expecting to be removed to a nursing hospital, where she could receive better attention. All the time I was with her she talked of what she was going to do to carry out her work.'

"I was alarmed, but I was told I could not prevent it. Christmas came. E. M. was very ill. But the old year passed, and she was still alive. 'You see you were wrong,' I said to Julia. 'E. M. is still alive.' Julia replied: 'I may be a few days out, but what I said is true.'

"About January 10 Julia wrote to me: 'You are going to see E. M. to-morrow. Bid her farewell. Make all necessary arrangements. You will never see her again on earth.' I went to see her. She was feverish, and when I bade her good-by I wondered if Julia was not mistaken. Two days after I received a telegram informing me that E. M. had thrown herself out of a four story window in delirium, and had been picked up dead. It was within a day or two of the end of the

twelve months since the warning first was given. This narrative can be proved by the manuscript of the original messages, and by the signed statement of my two secretaries, to whom, under the seal of secrecy, I communicated the warnings of Julia. No better substantiated case of prevision written down at the time, and that not once but twelve times, is on record. However you may account for it, telepathy, conscious or unconscious, breaks down here.

"The lady whose initials were E. M. and whose tragic fate I have just described, had promised me that if she died before me she would do four things. She had constantly written automatically during her life. She promised, in the first place, that she would use my hand if she could, after death, to tell me how it fared with her on the other side. In the second place, she promised that, if she could, she would appear to one or more of her friends to whom she could show herself. In the third place, she would come to be photographed, and, fourthly, she would send a message through a medium, authenticating the message by countersigning it with the simple mathematical figure of a cross within a circle.

"E. M. did all four. (1) She has repeatedly written with my hand.

"(2) She has repeatedly appeared to two friends of mine, one a woman, the other a man. She appeared once in a dining-room full of people. She passed unseen by any but her friend, who declares that she saw her distinctly. On another occasion she appeared in the street in broad daylight, walked for a little distance, and then vanished. I may say that her appear-

ance was so original it would be difficult to mistake her for anybody else.

"(3) She has been photographed at least half a dozen times after her death. All her portraits are plainly recognizable, but none of them are copies of any photographs taken in earth-life.

"(4) There remains the test of a message accompanied by the sign of a cross within a circle. I did not get this for several months. I had almost given up hopes, when one day a medium who was lunching with a friend of mine received it on the first attempt she made at automatic writing. 'Tell William not to blame me for what I did. I could not help myself,' was the message. Then came a plainly but roughly drawn circle, and inside it the cross. No one knew of our agreement as to the test but myself. I did not know the medium. I was not present, nor was my friend expecting any message from E. M.

"Is it surprising, then, that after such experiences I have no more doubt of the possibility of communicating with the so-called dead than I have of being able to send this article to the *Fortnightly Review*?

"I have referred to spirit photography. Let me disarm any skeptical reader by admitting that nothing is more easy than to bogus spirit photographs, and further that an expert conjurer can almost always cheat the most vigilant observer. The use of marked plates, which I handle, expose and develop myself, no doubt affords some protection against fraud. But my belief in the authenticity of spirit photographs rests upon a far firmer foundation than that of the fallible vigilance of the experimenter. The supreme test of an

authentic spirit photograph is that a plainly recognizable portrait of a dead person shall be obtained by a photographer who knows nothing whatever of the existence of such a person, and that no visible form shall be seen by the sitter in front of the camera.

"I have had such photographs, not once, but many times. I will here only mention one. The photographer whose mediumship enables him to photograph the invisibles is a very old and rather illiterate man, to whom this faculty was at one time a serious hindrance to his photographic business. He is clairvoyant and clairaudient. During the late Boer war I went with a friend to have a sitting with him, wondering who would come. I had hardly taken my seat before the old man said: 'I had a great fright the other day. An old Boer came into the studio carrying a gun. He fairly frightened me, he looked so fierce. Said I to him, "Go away; I don't like guns." And he went away. Now he's back again. He came with you. He has not got a gun now, and he does not look fierce. Shall we let him stay?'

"'By all means,' I replied. 'Do you think you could get his photograph?'

"'I don't know,' said the old man; 'I can try.'

"So I sat down in front of the camera, and an exposure was duly made. Neither my friend nor I could see any other person in the room but the photographer and ourselves.

"Before the plate was removed I asked the photographer: 'You spoke to the old Boer the other day. Could you speak to him again?'

"'Yes,' he said; 'he's still there behind you.'

“‘Would he answer any question, if you asked him?’

“‘I don’t know,’ said the old man; ‘I can try.’

“‘Ask him what his name is.’

“‘The photographer appeared to put a mental question, and to listen for a reply. Then he said:

“‘He says his name is Piet Botha.’

“‘Piet Botha,’ I objected. ‘I know Philip, Louis, Chris, and I do not know how many other Bothas, but Piet I never heard of.’

“‘That’s what he says his name is,’ doggedly replied the old man.

“‘When he developed the plate there was seen standing behind me a hirsute, tall, stalwart man, who might have been a Boer or a Moujik. I said nothing, but waited till the war came to an end, and General Botha came to London. I sent the photograph to him by Mr. Fisher, who was Prime Minister of the Orange Free State. Next day Mr. Wessels, another Free State delegate, came to see me.

“‘Where did you get that photograph,’ he asked, ‘the photograph you gave to Mr. Fisher?’ I told him exactly how it had come.

“‘He shook his head. ‘I don’t hold with superstition. Tell me, how did you get that portrait? That man did not know William Stead—that man was never in England.’

“‘Well,’ I replied, ‘I have told you how I got it, and you need not believe me if you don’t like. But why are you so excited about it?’

“‘Why,’ said he, ‘because the man was a near relative of mine. I have got his portrait hanging up in my house at home.’

“‘Really,’ I said. ‘Is he dead?’”

“‘He was the first Boer commandant killed in the siege at Kimberly.’”

“‘And what was his name?’”

“‘Pietrus Johannes Botha,’ he replied; ‘but we always called him Piet Botha for short.’”

“I still have the portrait in my possession. It has been subsequently identified by two other Free Staters who knew Piet Botha well. This at least is not a case which telepathy can explain. Nor will the hypothesis of fraud hold water. It was the merest accident that I asked the photographer to see if the spirit would give his name. No one in England, so far as I have been able to ascertain, knew that any Piet Botha ever existed.

“What is wanted is that those who profess to believe in the existence of life after death should honestly attempt to define the kind of evidence which they would consider convincing. I have narrated in this paper what seems to me conclusive evidence of the continuance of personality after death.

“All these incidents occurred in my own personal experience. Their credibility to my readers depends upon their estimate of my veracity. These things actually occurred as I have written them down. Supposing that they had happened to you, my reader, could you refuse to admit that there is at least a *prima facie* case for a careful, exhaustive scientific examination into the subject? What more evidence, what kind of evidence, under what conditions, is it wanted, before conviction is established?

“I ask no one hastily to accept anything on other

people's testimony. It is true that all people are not mediums, any more than all telephones can take Marconi messages. I am fortunate in being my own medium, which eliminates one possible hypothesis. But there are plenty of honest mediums, some possibly in your own family, if you cared to seek them.

"One last word. For the last fifteen years I have been convinced by the pressure of a continually accumulating mass of first-hand evidence of the truth of the persistence of personality after death, and the possibility of intercourse with the departed. But I always said, 'I will wait until some of my own family has passed beyond the grave before I finally declare my convictions on this subject.'

"Twelve months ago this month of December, I saw my eldest son, whom I had trained in the fond hope that he would be my successor, die at the early age of thirty-three. The tie between us was of the closest. No one could deceive me by fabricated spurious messages from my beloved son.

"Twelve months have passed, in almost every week of which I have been cheered and comforted by messages from my boy, who is nearer and dearer to me than ever before. The preceding twelve months I had been much abroad. I heard less frequently from him in that year than I have heard from him since he passed out of sight.

"I have not taken his communications by my own hand. I knew him so well that what I wrote might have been the unconscious echoes of converse in the past. He has communicated with me through the hands of two slight acquaintances, and they have been

one and all as clearly stamped with the impress of his own character and mode of thought as any of the letters he wrote to me during his sojourn on earth.

"After this I can doubt no more. For me the problem is solved, the truth is established, and I am glad to have this opportunity of testifying publicly to all the world that, so far as I am concerned, doubt on this subject is henceforth impossible."

CHAPTER XIX

THE CHRIST QUESTION

"I have a few more words I wish to say in regard to the Christ question.

"I have said that I had no doubt but there was a man crucified about the time of the beginning of the Christian era, upon which all of this thing called Christianity—the great central dogma of the world—has attached.

"I will now give you my reason for believing this.

"This personage has come to us as many as four times—my wife and me—at our circle. At least he told us he was the same man that was crucified in consequence of his trying to free his people—the Jews—from the yoke of bondage in which the Jewish priesthood had for ages held them.

"He told us that all of the miraculous connected with his history was myth and priestly fabrication.

"That he came into the world the natural way, and by trying to make better conditions for the common people of his race, he was crucified.

“He told us that it was made known to him by the laws of communication that there obtain, that we much wished to know the truth concerning this Christ question; so he came purposely to enlighten us.

“Are we deceived? That I cannot tell, but do not think so. If Spiritualism is true, why should we doubt this?

“I asked him if he had difficulty in reaching those in the mortal, having been on that side of life so long. He said he could reach those in the mortal when it was necessary.

“My wife—being clairvoyant—was deeply impressed with his appearance.

“Are we deceived? Here is a thing Christ is said to have said: ‘Where two or three are gathered together in my name there will I be in the midst.’ If he said this, what reason have we to doubt that he met with us upon these several occasions?

“Do we believe since Christ was crucified he has become Omniscient, Omnipotent and Omnipresent? If so, he must necessarily have lost his individuality, because Infinity cannot be individualized, and if individualized he could be only in one place at a time. So he could not answer the conditions where he is required in a thousand places at the same time, where this text is repeated in prayer and in testimony, throughout all Christendom.

“Are we deceived? If Spiritualists are deceived, my friends, they will never be accused on the other side of the great divide, of this deception, by their Protestant or Catholic brothers; nor will the Materialist say, ‘There, what did I tell you?’ We will never accuse

each other of teaching heresy; we will all be sleeping our eternal sleep, and the deception here upon the earth will sweep on.

“And who is responsible for the deception?”

CHAPTER XX

CONCLUSION

A BRIEF analysis of the “Golden Rule” seems necessary at this time, that my position may be understood. There are many subtleties and chances for misinterpretation to this much referred to and often quoted rule. I will cite an example or two. One which may appeal to the mind of the reader as well as any that occurs at this time is that which led to the War of the Rebellion—1861-1865. Our nation, a Christian nation cemented together by the same code of morals—the Bible—the freeholders of both Northland and Southland could study their “golden rule” and make each for himself his interpretation.

The freeholders of the South interpret their “Book” and claim that by divine right they can hold in bondage the negro population that they have transplanted there. They were ready and willing to extend this right and privilege to their Northern brothers as an application to this “Golden Rule,” but in this case poor Sambo and Dinah are left clean out of the reckoning. Another application of the Golden Rule: Here stands in front of a saloon a patron of the bar longing for a drink; how pleased he would be should some of his con-

vivial friends chance along and invite him to take a drink; he sees one of these friends coming down the street; the application of this Golden Rule occurs to him. I will ask him to drink with me; the invitation is accepted and alternately the Golden Rule is applied and the wassail continues. And here again a wife and offspring may be suffering in consequence of this money squandered, but they are left entirely out of the reckoning.

The application of this Golden Rule may be carried a step farther, and I would ask you to give here your careful consideration. Here is a flourishing town favored by conditions of manufacture and commerce, and supports several denominational Christian churches; the ministers of these churches have lived to learn that harmony is better than discord, and as an application of the Golden Rule they frequently hold union service and frequently exchange pulpits, and express themselves to each, that all the prosperity which they behold throughout all Christendom is owing to the Bible and their work, the Christian religion, and are willing to shake hands and congratulate each other upon the success of the churches and of Christianity.

With present-day knowledge and all that may be brought to bear upon this subject,—the higher “criticism” of the Bible and all arrayed against the claims of dogmatic Christianity, are they honest to their convictions, and are they applying the Golden Rule in its broadest sense to a hungry, benighted and dying world? If they do not firmly believe all they teach and preach, they certainly are not practicing this

Golden Rule in its full measure, which they for centuries have admonished their flocks to follow.

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Am I a Spiritualist? I make no claim to having attained to a state of spiritual unfoldment that would entitle me to the name of Spiritualist, but if a belief that those who have passed this stage of being here on earth still live and that they can hold converse with those in the mortal constitutes a Spiritualist, then I am one, and this volume that I expect to give to the world I have aimed to make conform to this "Golden Rule," so that it will square with all the angles of human conscience that my finite mind can grasp. I certainly think I would have been thankful indeed, despite the imperfections that may be pointed out by critics, if a volume like this had have fallen into my hands at any time in my life after reaching the years of understanding up to the time of the dawn of this glorious truth. Then I would ask, "Should I pander and truckle to the opinions and teachings of error because they are established in the minds of erring humanity and because they are popular?"

In my endeavors to point out the proof that the Bible is of human origin and is not entitled to the claims made for it, I have aimed to avoid invective and vituperation. There is much from necessity that has to be omitted along these lines for lack of space; but the student can study his Bible and supply the deficiency.

I pondered long the question whether to give my views to the public upon this inflammatory subject, or let my thoughts sink into oblivion with my personality and let the problem work itself out as it might. How I have decided is apparent. Whether I have chosen wisely rests with the uncertainties of the indefinable future.

Is Spiritualism a delusion? I have taken pains to show that it is the factor that is woven into the world's history, back through the primitive ages—the period of Bible-making—and that it is the same, and is operative through the same law now as then. If Spiritualism is true, what then? What should be the rational attitude of mankind toward it? Is it wise to say I care nothing for it? The Bible and the churches are good enough for me; that has been my ancestral rock of salvation for generations back, and I do not wish my faith disturbed. Readers, if Spiritualism is true, it was true before your Bible or your creed had birth, and will remain so to the end of time and for the countless ages of eternity, and all of the opposing power of pope and priest, allied with the combined force of the whole Protestant offshoot, cannot avail to blot it out. You may retard its progress on earth for a time, but the time is drawing to a close.

Perchance, you may be led to think that I am to receive a royalty upon all converts to Spiritualism, and for this reason I am trying to persuade men. No, I do not see how your belief could directly affect me one way or the other: except harmony is better than discord, and discord must be the result where error is rampant.

I doubt not if this truth of Spiritualism was understood, and the world's conduct was shaped accordingly, we would have a much better world to live in than we have now.

What could have emanated from the human mind more unreasonable than the tenets of the Papal Church—that sins can be absolved by man for a certain money consideration, that said sin is thereby cancelled and the transgressor is free?

Again, on the other hand, how could there have been a scheme devised where ignorance could be taken advantage of to accrue revenue that would prove more fruitful than this of this Holy Papal See? And when it was inculcated upon the mind that the individual could transgress—providing he did not commit the “unpardonable sin”—for seventy times seven four hundred and ninety times and still be forgiven by coming down with the required fee?

As a financial scheme, I should say it was supreme.

The better enlightened Protestant churches of the present day look upon the Mother Church in this same light, that her plan was oppression and extortion, and that ignorance is the prime factor necessary to her perpetuity.

Then, after making this admission, let us make a few comparisons between the Mother and the Protestant churches of our day, and see if they are invulnerable to the arrows of reason.

The power of forgiveness has reverted back to the Master, and your manifold sins are washed away by his atoning blood. The same number of transgressions

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may be absolved, and these at the eleventh hour, so the preceding eleven-twelfths of your life—if you live as you expect to—you are free to steep in sin and crime if the civil, man-made law of the commonwealth does not overtake you.

Though this plan may not be so grinding as the preceding one, but, as has been the burden of my argument, and as is attested to by our arisen friends, this also is unreasonable and untrue. Again, you, in order to be an up-to-date Christian, must associate yourself with some one of the orthodox churches, in order to hear the Gospel preached in modern style, and in responding to all of the calls made upon you in the name of the Christian religion, which must be paid for in cold cash by the members of the flock, so there is considerable similarity between the parent and her offspring.

It is free salvation, but the cost of dispensing comes pretty high if you would maintain your standing.

In regard to emolument, the clergy seems in no way to differ from the ordinary man of the world. They all seem to want all they can get, despite the injunction of the Master—as I have been informed upon what I call good authority that certain among them for their services have not objected to the modest sum of fifty thousand dollars per annum.

I take no pleasure in speaking or writing derogatory of the orthodox churches, only to point out that which I feel certain is error; and that is, unfortunately, the larger portion of their creed and the foundation upon which it rests, the Bible, as it is taught, “a revelation from God.”

But I do take pleasure in advocating the teachings of Spiritualism, because I am thoroughly convinced of the genuineness of Spiritual phenomena—(bear in mind, fraudulent phenomena is not Spiritual phenomena and is nothing I expect to deal with in this work, only to speak of it to let you know I am conscious of its existence)—and the rationality of its teachings, purporting to come from our friends who have crossed the Great Divide. And what I censure the Christian churches for at the present day is for ignoring, calumniating, and treating with aspersion the proof upon which their own claim or hope of immortality rests—Spirit Return, Spirit Communion, Spiritualism Demonstrated.

If Spiritualism is not true, St. Paul's testimony and all of his epistles are not worth one straw; for when he speaks concerning Spiritual gifts, he proves absolutely that the power through which he was converted, and his course of procedure was changed, that the cause he espoused was Spiritualism as it manifests itself and is understood to-day.

It does not matter particularly what else he may have said, or how what he said may have been tortured into, or what may be appended that he never said at all, that orthodoxy may use for texts, this main thing stands out full and clear, and all of the inventions in the way of priestly or orthodox veneering or interpolation cannot cover it up. And when he says, "Be ye not deceived: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap," shows that the communications from the spirit-world were the same then as to-day, and that the same eternal truths were given to Paul

that our arisen friends give us to-day. And again, when he speaks of his being translated to the third plane of the spirit-realm, makes the proof to the student of psychic research conclusive and knocks the foundation clean from under the orthodox claim "that Spiritualism is of evil."

Spiritualism, with its cumulative proof, both ancient and modern, is my abiding joy and actuates me to lend a helping hand in the promulgation of these eternal truths.

Some of my readers may say: "If your claim be true, your book is a pretty small affair to stand against the thousands of volumes in the way of commentaries, sermons and homilies, and all of the innumerable publications written in support of the Christian religion."

This may look so to the superficial observer, and I can only say that Falsehood, though clothed in regal splendor and declared by all the verbosity and ingenuity that blind zeal can invent, will never make it true. The wrong you do, you must atone for; there is no escape from the consequences of sin. Is this unreasonable? Could we reasonably wish it otherwise? Does not our innate nature repudiate this doctrine of unloading our sins upon another?

Suppose in the advent of Modern Spiritualism the communications had have been on the side of orthodox Christianity, and those who returned were those whose robes had been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, and that the population in heaven was comparatively small, because the great majority had taken the broad road that led to destruction, and the

most of their friends in earth-life were in hell, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched; but they themselves were supremely happy in being saved and in singing songs of praise to God and their Savior—would our orthodox friends have tumbled to Spiritualism in this case? And which would be the pleasanter revelation—this, or Modern Spiritualism as revealed by our spirit-friends who come down the shining highway to tell us these eternal truths, “that perfect justice is the law and that none are eternally lost, and that a helping hand is extended to the most depraved soul and they are shown the way that leads to better conditions”?

To those who, perchance, may read this book and be as ignorant as was I a few years ago in regard to Spiritual literature, and may be desirous, as was I, to farther investigate the subject, to such I would say there is at present *The Progressive Thinker*, edited by J. R. Francis, No. 40 Loomis St., Chicago, Ill.; *The Sunflower*, published by the Hamburg Publishing Co., Hamburg, N. Y. These papers are both weeklies, at \$1.00 per year. Here is a monthly journal called *Reason*, at Rochester, N. Y.; price \$1.00 per year.

In taking some one of these papers you will be in touch with the Spiritual literature in the way of books and papers, and you may be astonished to find what a mine of knowledge is opened up to you.

It was somewhere about sixteen years ago that a traveling show struck an adjoining town, and there was

considerable excitement over a woman that sat on a platform blindfolded, and a man moved amongst the crowd and whatever was exhibited to this man he asks the woman what such and such things are; she tells him; he asks her to farther describe if there was any reading on it, whatever that might be, and she would tell him with unerring precision. There was considerable excitement at the time over it, some declaring against it on principles that it was contrary to natural law, and that it was but a trick if they could only catch on. I made earnest inquiries in regard to confederates, mirrors, and the like, as I was not to the show myself. A few days later I was at this town and was speaking of this phenomenon, and there was a man, a stranger to me, he seemed an intelligent man and one whose trend of thought seemed to lead in the same direction with my own. He told me he did not attend the show when it was in his home town, but upon hearing this account it aroused his curiosity and he decided to follow it up to its next place of exhibition. He said he took his little girl with him. When this woman was on exhibition and the man was at his work as usual, this man said he felt in his pockets to see what he might find to be described by this blindfolded woman; and it happened to be a trunk-check. The man says, "What has this gentleman got in his hand?" She said, "A trunk-check." Said he, "What are the figures?" She replied, "3-2-3-2." Then he said his little girl felt in her pockets and brought out a small knife. The man said, "What has this girl got?" "A penknife." The man telling this said: "In place of a blade in one part of the knife was a

little hook"—he did not know what it was for—but the man said, "There is something more about this knife; what is it?" Ans. "A button-hook."

He said this was the case in every instance, that the answers came promptly, with no mistakes, and that it had so wrought upon his mind that he had lain awake nights thinking about it.

I asked him about the possibility of collusion. He said it was nonsense to think of trying to explain it in that way, as it was in the crowd where she could not possibly see; besides, she was blindfolded and had her back to them. I saw the inconsistency of urging an explanation of this kind.

This was before I had any knowledge of Spiritualism, and I had become very skeptical about man's surviving the death of the body; but this led me to think seriously that if a human mind has capabilities like this, there may be more about life than we may think.

I here speak of this human attribute, telepathy or mindreading, to show with what incredibility it was first received; but after it had forced its way into recognition and could no longer be disputed by the intelligent observer, and has now become an acknowledged fact. Telepathy is now used by those who once declared against it as a weapon now with which to fight Spiritualism. And thus it goes.

I am in no way worried in regard to the fate of Spiritualism; if it is true, as I certainly believe—and, I might say, know—there need be no solicitude in regard to its future. It is oppressed and down-trodden humanity that I would be pleased to help. It is evident that the line along which civilization has been

moving for some decades back is going to bring us face to face with terrible disaster, to be followed by disaster, just as has been in ages past, and will continue until we get ourselves in harmony with the Truth, which, I am impelled to believe, is vested in the teachings of Spiritualism.

The bondholder and millionaire may laugh at this, but there has been laughing done in the ages past at those who have pointed out impending calamities; but their laughter did not assuage it then, nor will it now.

Reader, what will be the state of affairs on earth five hundred years in the future? You say you do not know; nor do I. But I do not believe there will be a crucified God preached as the only hope of salvation to a sin-cursed world then as now. I think the world will have outgrown this error before that period is reached. It is talked and thought by progressive Christians that the time is coming when all of the different creeds will have coalesced into one religion. This is not irrational to believe, but the question is, What will be the tenets of this newly evolved religion? It will be unstable and of little worth unless founded on the bedrock of truth and justice.

We read in the Scripture of the stone that the builders rejected. What was this stone? You say Christ was the stone referred to. That may be true, but this passage can be used in a much broader sense and a more rational application, when the world comes to discover that this rejected stone most appropriately applies to Spiritualism.

And when Christ said, "Verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me the works that I do shall he do

also, and greater works than these shall he do," will then be better understood, and faith will then indeed be changed to sight, and the poor tempest-tossed, buffeted earth-pilgrim can then receive the earnest of his hopes and desires—a life to follow this, with just as good conditions as you have earned, and always a chance for promotion.

Dear friends, suppose in place of your weekly prayer meetings, where the burden of your testimony is to have your spiritual strength renewed, your faith strengthened, and to have your doubts removed, and for God to help your unbelief, and that you may remain steadfast, etc.—suppose, in place of this, you should convene in your chapel, and with a subdued light you should all clasp hands and wait for the manifestation of the spirit—what wonderful results you soon would get! In a gathering like this, where harmony prevailed, you would ere long have it discovered to you that you would have sensitives among you, through whom the old-time wonders would be made manifest, that the Christian supposes to have passed from earth two thousand years ago, would be found to be with you "just the same to-day." It would seem that when our friends came greeting from across the Great Divide and identified themselves so that there could be no mistake, and they would instruct you in regard to making good conditions so that they could better manifest themselves to you, and could unfold the mysteries of life and being and of the great opportunities of the soul immortal, that this would be a greater joy than what you are getting now, materialism would then be compelled to make its exit, and it

would seem that we could get a foretaste of heaven while yet on earth.

Will this time ever come? I do not see why it is unlikely. I would take pleasure in your prayer meetings then, at least I certainly think I would.

This is the kind of prayer meeting that Bishop Haven recommends in his message, "Appeals to the Methodists." Bishop Haven passed out in 1880. This little tract was written by the hand of a most excellent mechanical writing medium, Mrs. Carrie E. S. Twing, in Springfield, Mass., in February, 1890. I wish every Methodist were in possession of a copy and would read it, and every member of the other Christian creeds as well.

This plan, I certainly believe, was Christ's will and wishes, and was without doubt his expectation when he gave to the world his last benediction. Who ever could have dreamed what was to follow after Christ took his departure?

To the psychic student of the present day, with the history of the past for him to scan, and knowing as he does the depravity of man in his incipient stage on earth, his proclivity to selfishness, that these Spiritual Truths should have been obscured and obliterated by the greed of a priestly hierarchy, is not so much to be wondered at. But that this fraud should go sweeping on, in spite of Reason and demonstrated Truth, at this intellectual age—the twentieth century—and with free access by all to this Christians' Book (the Bible) upon which their claim rests, baffles the mind of sober, thoughtful man versed in this modern religious science: Spiritualism.

CHAPTER XXI

And what is Spiritualism? Possibly the definition of this word has not been properly defined; so I will give three definitions, by three men prominent in the ranks of this New-Old Religion:

[By HARRISON D. BARRETT]

“Spiritualism is the opposite of Materialism, and stands for the real and permanent instead of the seeming and transitory. It is the psychic phenomena that are produced under certain favorable conditions. It is the science builded upon such phenomena, based upon known facts demonstrated by them. It is the philosophy deduced from known facts when logically arranged. It is a religion that binds into a perfect system the demonstrated facts in both psychic and physical science, crowning its work with a positive demonstration of the continuity of all life, and the relation of finite life to the Infinite.

“Spiritualism, then, is fourfold in its nature: It binds these four several parts into one whole, through which comes in a system of thought far in advance of any that the world has yet received. Given a phenomenon, this proves that there is a positive force at work to produce a certain result. Like results are produced from a series of similar phenomena, all proving the existence of this independent force. Further investigation proves that this force is intelligent, capable of logical thought and power to reason; from this is deduced the fact that there is mentality back of the

force producing such phenomena. The relation of these phenomena, one to the other, shows that there are many mentalities beyond the pale of the physical, all uniting to testify to one and the same fact. Science is knowledge experimentally demonstrated. Experimentation in the psychic field demonstrates the fact that an intelligent entity has survived the change called death. As physical science deals with material phenomena, so psychic, or the higher science, deals with the real phenomena of the spiritual. Through the facts deduced by so-called physical science, the philosophers have proceeded to speculate in regard to the cosmos, the origin and destiny of man. From the facts demonstrated by psychic science, the higher philosophy is deduced that is predicated upon the knowledge of what the cosmos is, from whence man came, and what his future destiny will be. It clearly proves another point concerning which theologians and philosophers have speculated in vain for centuries: *the demonstration of the Infinite enthroned in the universe*. It is the province of Spiritualism, then, to do all of these things enumerated above. It gives us the phenomena, the science, the philosophy, which, when blended into oneness, gives to the world at last a religion that is provable both by induction and deduction, by scientific demonstration, and spiritual revelation. It is a religious science and a scientific religion, a religious philosophy and a philosophical religion. It gives to the world knowledge of the future, and has no negatives or speculations to offer to those who investigate its sublime teachings. The theologian and Christian say, 'I believe'; the agnostic says, 'I don't know'; while the

materialist affirms annihilation of man's consciousness at the change called death. Spiritualism has one answer to all of these speculations, and in two words solves the difficult problem for all mankind, saying, '*I know.*' Knowledge is power, and as Spiritualism knows, it has something positive to give to the world in place of blind belief, credulity, and creedal speculations.

"Spiritualism is the demonstration that man survives the change called death, is the same conscious individual as before, has the same weaknesses, the same tendencies, the same mentality as before; that man enters upon spiritual life at the time of change with all his preconceived ideas, all of his peculiar views consciously in mind. It shows that he rises in the scale of being in ratio with his desire for such unfoldment and progress. It is the demonstration also that this progress is not interrupted by the change called death, but is rather enhanced because of the larger views that the emancipated spirit will have of life and its possibilities. It is the demonstration that the soul-world is the only real, and that so-called matter is transitory in its nature and unenduring in its potentialities. It is also the demonstration that this spiritual or soul-world has within it the possibilities of eternal progression and unfoldment for every human soul. It is also the positive demonstration of the fact that these souls, emancipated from the thralldom of the flesh, do not lose their love for those they left on earth nor their interest in their moral and spiritual welfare. It further demonstrates that life is as eternal as it is infinite in its power. The father and the mother lose not their affection for their children, nor the children for their

parents, the husband for his wife, the wife for her husband, the lover for the maiden of his choice, nor the friend for the companion in friendship of his soul. It brings to all this knowledge instead of faith and hope, and shows them the larger light of the clearer truth that the soul-world has for every sentient being. Spiritualism, then, is the knowledge of life here and hereafter, the binding of the two worlds into one, the destroyer of materialism, the builder of the Spiritual Kingdom of God in the hearts and souls of men, the messenger that flies from point to point with the glad tidings of great joy that there is no death. It is the phenomena of all the ages, the science of all sciences the philosophy of all philosophies, and the religion of all religions.

“Blest river of progression,
 Pursue thy onward way;
 Flow thou to every nation,
 Nor in thy richness stay.
 Stay not till all the lowly
 Triumphant reach their home,
 Stay not till all the holy
 Proclaim: “The truth is come.””

“Spiritualism is the beautiful child of our father Wisdom and our mother Love, the healer of all diseases, the illuminator and destroyer of all darkness, the remover of the veil of ignorance and fear, the giver of light and knowledge, the sustaining friend in the hour of trial, the comforter in the hour of death, the demonstrator of immortality, the leader of men’s souls to the hilltops of truth, the emancipator from the serf-

dom of creeds, the purveyor of life, and enters into man's soul wheresoever it finds him, and leads him upward over the winding paths of truth into the temple of the Infinite, where he shall find that peace which passes understanding, makes him truly free, and proves the fatherhood of the Infinite, the motherhood of Nature, and the universal brotherhood of all mankind.

“What, then, is Spiritualism? It is that which proves, first, the existence of Infinite Life, diffused and differentiated through the universe; second, that which proves that Truth reveals the Infinite and gleans wisdom for men; third, that which demonstrates that every soul is immortal; fourth, that which proves that eternal progression awaits every human soul; fifth, that which shows spirits can and do return to earth to prove to man that they have conquered death; sixth, that which gives to men and women of the present time the principle of sympathy that makes life's burdens easier to bear, and, seventh, brings the knowledge from the higher life that *love* is the lever by which all classes of men can be lifted to higher thought and action.

“Taken all in all, it is the highest system of scientific, philosophical, and religious thought that the world has ever seen, and will, if adopted, prove the panacea for all social, political, and other ills that now beset the human family. Investigate its sublime teachings and learn for yourself, O reader, that there is no such thing as Death, but that all is Life, and that Life is Love—

“‘Love that shall be
Our joyous rest eternally.’”

WHAT IS SPIRITUALISM?

[By HUDSON TUTTLE]

"What is Spiritualism?

"Is it the phenomena? Yes.

"Is it the philosophy? Yes.

"Is it the science? Yes, all and vastly more. It is the science of life here and hereafter. It is a cosmology whose book of Genesis is written in the chaotic vapor out of which the plastic world-zones were fashioned; whose historic pages relate in the alphabet of worlds and upheaved strata the evolution of the material universe; whose revelations extend out of the clouds of this life into the pure realm of spirit.

"A Spiritualist should understand the revelations of this infinite volume. It would be impossible to do so perfectly, but the desire should exist and the effort constantly be made, for it is assured that some time the spirit in its upward flight will realize all our minds idealize.

"With such high aspirations, with the knowledge that man is an epitome of the universe, the concentration of its energies, and endowed with the sublime heritage of immortality, there comes a new and most beautiful moral philosophy, entering into the practical details of common life. If this moral system is understood, man becomes too noble to do wrong, to waste his energies, to do aught but the highest, the truest and the best. Facing two worlds, held by the laws of matter while in the body, he should conform to the requirements of his condition and meet the tasks mate-

riality imposes, not for the gain of the hour, not for earthly recompense, the sordid, the selfish, the aggressive, only so far as has relation to advancement in the future. Of that life the present is the beginning and the preparation. Whatever dwarfs, mars, degrades, or distorts the spirit, as an eternal entity whose goal is perfection, is evil, wrong or sin.

“Righteous is the compliance with the laws and conditions of the material world in the direction of the furtherance of spiritual perfection. Religion is the highest expression of the *perfect* moral character, not observance of customs; the making of prayers and sacrifices; the belief in dogmas and creeds, but devotion to the highest conception of truth, right for right’s own sake, and the perfection of self by unselfish activity for the good of others. Would you then have the Spiritualist ignore the manifestations? By no means. They are the evidences of future existence, leading upward to this grander conception. Mediumship, rightly understood, as a state of receptivity to the thoughts of spirit-friends as helpers and advisers, is one of the most desirable possessions. Such receptivity in some degree is possessed by all, and being susceptible to cultivation, it is in every respect more desirable to perfect one’s self than to investigate through other sources. Receptivity in this high sense becomes a most important educational factor. It is one of the possibilities of the future to encourage the culture of the sensitive faculty, and the results will be far more wonderful in normal education than now arises from what seems abnormal and the product of chance. In other words, the musical genius of a Blind Tom, or the mathematical of a

Colburn, and similar proficiency in every department of knowledge, may be the rule and not the rare exception.

“What is Spiritualism? What do Spiritualists believe? As there is no creed and no one is bound by any ritual, it becomes exceedingly difficult to make a statement of belief applicable to all; yet there are certain fundamental principles on which all agree, as forming the basis of the spiritual philosophy:

“1. Man is a dual being, comprising a physical structure and a spirit. The spirit is evolved by and out of a physical body, having corresponding form and development.

“2. This spiritual being is immortal.

“3. Death is the separation of this duality, and does not affect the spirit, morally or intellectually.

“4. The spirit holds the same relations to the spirit-world that man holds to physical nature.

“5. The spirit, there as here, works out its own salvation, receiving the reward of well-doing, and suffering for wrongful actions.

“6. The knowledge, attainment and experience of earth-life form the basis of the spirit-life, which is hence a continuity of the same existence.

“7. Spiritual bodies are evolved by, and eliminated from, physical bodies. They differ in grades of morality and intelligence, as men differ on earth.

“8. These departed spirits, retaining all their love and affection, can and do return and communicate with those in this life. Their capability of so doing does not depend upon their intelligence or morality.

“9. Mediumship rests upon sensitiveness, which is

not dependent on culture or morals, though elevated and controlled thereby.

“10. Individualized spirit is the reality, and the highest type of creative energy. In this sense man is divine and endowed with infinite capabilities, and united in brotherhood, having a common origin, purpose and destiny.”

WHAT IS SPIRITUALISM?

[By THOMAS GALES FORSTER]

“‘Is God asleep, that he should cease to be
 All that he was to Prophets of the Past;
 All that he was to Poets of old time;
 All that he was to Hero-souls, who clad
 Their sun-bright minds in adamant mail
 Of constancy, and walked the world with Him,
 And spake with His deep music on their tongue,
 And acted with his pulse within the heart,
 And died, or seemed to outward sense to die,
 Vanishing in light, as if the sun
 Gathered its image back into itself?
 Is God less real now than when he sang,
 And smote with His right hand the harp of space,
 And all the stars from His electric breath,
 In golden galaxies of harmony,
 Went choiring out, heart-flushed with life from
 Him?’

“The Spiritualist believes that after the phenomenon termed death has occurred, and you have buried the body, man has an individualized conscience beyond the

grave. You know that all Spiritualists believe this, and that all who believe this are called Spiritualists, whatever else they believe. The Spiritualists believe in addition, that these individualized spirits can, and under proper conditions, do, communicate with the friends they have left in the form. But there is a large body of minds in Christendom that declare these two items of the spiritualistic faith to be erroneous, on the ground that they are opposed by the Bible, and that they are antagonistic to the teachings of the Bible. With this declaration of Christendom we are at issue; the phenomena of modern Spiritualism, upon which rests these two items of faith, are not only not antagonistic to the Bible, but they are strictly analagous to the facts of the Bible; indeed, that there is such a striking analogy existing between the two, as to be apparent to the most casual observer.

“A miracle according to the Orthodox interpretation, is said to be constituted through a deviation from the cause of nature. But the intelligent inquirer at once suggests the inquiry. How shall man be enabled by this rule to determine when a miracle is performed? For, even in the present age of earnest inquiry, who shall decide as to the legitimate course of Nature? In the days of Moses and of Jesus, men were not so well informed as in the present day with regard to such matters, and consequently were more liable to run into error in drawing their deductions from the phenomena by which they were surrounded. Upon this point, Spiritualism declares that a miracle, in the theological sense, is scientifically, philosophically and morally impossible; and that if it were possible that a miracle

could take place in that sense, it would not only destroy the divinity of the Bible, but it would destroy divinity itself—and why? Thus: no one will deny that God is infinite in his attributes, and that natural law is the effect of the perfection and divinity of those attributes, and that consequently, all things have been arranged upon the wisest and best plan, for the wisest and best purposes.

“Any deviation, therefore, from this plan must be a detraction, because there can be no change in what is perfect, except for the worse. To have a system of religion as is done in the Orthodox world, upon the performance of miracles, with the theological interpretation of the word, is to base that system upon the inharmony of the divine attributes; and in so doing you necessarily deprive Deity of that which alone makes him infinite.

“The spiritual school, therefore, is entirely justified in declaring that a miracle, so interpreted, is utterly impossible. The legitimate corollary, therefore, is that all the various phenomena of the past, as recorded in the Old and New Testaments, together with the analogous manifestations of the present day, were and are in accordance with the harmonious action of natural law; and that none of the powers that were exercised in the past through any of the prophets, patriarchs or seers, through Jesus or his apostles were drawn from without the domain of Nature.”

These three definitions give us—I should say—as good an idea of what Spiritualism is, as our finite minds can encompass.

Mr. Forster in his course of reasoning speaks of destroying the divinity of the Bible; the extent to which a book partakes of the quality called divinity is the amount of valuable truth it contains.

Possibly I may not grasp Mr. Forster's meaning, albeit, however, we do not wish to reopen the case.

Now in regard to truth I wish to say a word.

This word is many times used in a vague and abstract way and we are many times misled owing to the immense range of use, and interpretation. To illustrate here are two examples.

Truth No. 1. John Doe purchased of Richard Roe a farm, consideration \$2,000. Upon investigation this is found to be the truth in every detail; but what does it amount to outside of the parties immediately concerned? And to them it is only a transitory shift and is no matter of vital interest to them; but it is truth.

Truth No. 2. A confidential friend of mine whose veracity I have never had occasion to question, comes and tells me that he has actually and truly held converse with an intimate friend who had passed this life many years ago. Well as in the case of John Doe, a committee are set at work investigating, and after making what are called test conditions to the utmost extent of human ingenuity, aided in this many times by these spirit intelligences they at length return with this verdict: "It is a fact the so-called dead are not dead at all." What a tremendous contrast between these two truths: the first to be dismissed with the next succeeding moment. The second the most important and stupendous truth that ever set to vibration the circumambient air. If there is a more important

thing that can engage our minds than this, let the savant who knows stand forth and make it known.

Then let us again repeat the dual interrogation, the propositions upon which this work is built.

“Is the Bible a revelation from the Infinite? And do we survive the change called Death?” I have answered these questions according to the best of my ability considering all the limitations by which I am environed.

I have aimed to treat the Scripture fairly and bring out the very best there is in it that is pertinent to our case. But the great bulk is like the deal between John Doe and Richard Roe, it is valueless to our present day needs.

I have made selections from the Spiritual literature that I have within the few years past read, that has deeply interested me. There is a vast amount to draw from. These selections which I here give with the other proof has radically changed my course of thought and has certainly made me a happier man.

Then the question resolves itself into this. If this be true, that the so called dead can return and exchange thoughts with those in the physical, and the corollary of their evidence is “that the Christian religion rests on a false foundation, namely, the Bible, and that Salvation through a crucified God is a deep-rooted error, and that through false teaching we get a wrong conception of Death and its meaning; that it is not the arch fiend that the clergy tells us, but is a sequence as natural as birth. That Death is the door that leads to the better and higher life. Those who have been there for a long time tell us, that they

can hardly call it that they commenced to live until their earth career was closed.

Then I would ask, what should be the attitude of those who have examined the claims of Spiritualism and found them true?

Should we rest supinely and wait for our arisen friends to do the work of evangelizing the world? They are willing and will gladly do their part, but the work to be done belongs to our plain of being and is solely for our benefit, and if results are to be obtained we must lend a helping hand and prove ourselves in earnest.

I have heard of a sin called the sin of Omission which amounts to the same thing as hiding your light under a bushel, a thing disapproved of by Christ, for he commands us to let our lights shine.

There is also another sin called the sin of Ignorance which St. Paul says is to be winked at. But let us stop a moment and consider this sin of Ignorance and the amount of winking that may sometimes be required to wink you wise.

Suppose you through self conceit and ignorance persist in making a journey, independent of the kindly advice of friends, and find yourself into a quagmire where you cannot extricate yourself, and you are floundering and sinking into the ooze and slime, yet you can see those who proffered their friendly advice and were willing to help you, but can now only wink at you as you are reaping the fruits of your folly. This is my interpretation to this sin of ignorance which is to be "winked at." How much consolation will you get out of the winking?

Now the great question is. Would the world be made better and would mankind be happier if Spiritualism were generally accepted, believed and understood?

I can only answer this question hypothetically but I certainly think, yes.

Now let us consider a few of the cardinal sources of sorrow and trouble that mankind is heir to at this present age.

1. Disease and death.
2. Intemperance and its concomitant evils.
3. Crime, all manner of crime where the criminal has to suffer as well as the one against whom the crime is committed.
4. Misdirected ambition which gives rise to our commercial age of graft and greed and predatory wealth, which has a tendency to corrupt the morals of our legislative bodies from the least to the greatest throughout the whole body politic; for it is a fact that none can deny that our legislatures are composed to a great extent and dominated largely by corporation attorneys and bondholders who are studying the mercenary interests of their principals and themselves.

And through political extravagance, exorbitant salaries, and waste of the public funds, and excessive taxes, this breeds a contagion of dissatisfaction among the laboring class which weakens their morals and incites them to vice and crime. This calls for enlarged jails and prisons, an increased force of lawyers, sheriffs, constables and policemen to preserve the peace, which is not preserved. I cannot dilate upon these evils, it

would require chapters; we all know that they exist.

How would Spiritualism effect a remedy to these difficulties? do you ask.

Well, firstly, what could "Rob the grave of victory and take the sting from Death" as would Spiritualism?

Now let us take all of the sins and crimes that mankind are prone to commit, collectively; then suppose that we all understand that our life continues, or survives the death of the body and that we carry our consciousness, our memory and our whole life record into the other world and this record is unfolded before our face, and the dark deeds that we may have thought were locked within our breasts, and forever sealed with the coffin lid are shown us as an open book, and we are conscious that the ones against whom these wrongs and crimes have been committed will be sure to meet us in the bye and bye, would this not make us more circumspective in our conduct and would we not be careful as to the record we carry with us to the great beyond?

The Christian Religion and Materialism are neither of them incentives to good conduct. The former teaches forgiveness, or atonement, while the latter teaches crass irresponsibility. Spiritualism teaches that what you sow that must you reap and if you persist in sowing the wind you must reap the whirlwind!

If this great truth could have been taught for the length of time that has Christianity—leaving out all coercion—do you think there would come to our ears at this time such reports as we are receiving of the

atrocities from barbarous Mexico, one of the Christian nations of the earth? I certainly do not think so.

Then assuming Spiritualism to be a fact, as those who have investigated most thoroughly declare it is, and that we take up the thread of life on the other shore just where we laid it down here; and after surveying the world's situation from all of the different angles that we can attain to, and we become satisfied that nine-tenths of the world's miseries, crimes and sins is the result of ignorance and that the great central source of this ignorance is a false conception of God and a fabulous Theology built thereon.

Then I would ask, is there not something yet to do for those who have received this Spiritual light? And does not this something consist in doing missionary work right here at home, in trying to lead our erring Christian Brothers and Sisters into this better light.

This may sound audacious to many, but let me tell you a thing. A short time since I was in conversation with a Christian clergyman, and I told him about the same as I say here in regard to the error that is preached and taught and this is what he said in substance: "Do you not see a marked difference between the preaching of to-day and that of forty or fifty years ago when the wrath of God and the tortures of the damned in hell was the burden of their preaching? You must not expect this change to be brought about too sudden; it is coming about as fast as the people are able to receive it." Now what does this go to prove? It proves that the Christian churches were preaching and teaching error forty or fifty years ago and that they are doing the same to-day only in a

somewhat modified form. But modified error is not truth, nor may it be any better than the original error. The Bible remains the same—and according to the inflexible decree of God it must, “For he who adds thereto God will add all of the plagues spoken of in the Book, and he who takes therefrom, his part is taken from the book of life.”

It was the King James version forty or fifty years ago and this is still used in the Christian pulpits to day as far as I know; and is taught and impressed upon the plastic mind of childhood and of youth and here is the great wrong. Orthodoxy teaches immortality in a way, but so unnatural and unreasonable that it can only breed Fanatics and Infidels and doubters. It has nothing to offer but the Bible, and this to be accepted on faith, because there is nothing, —as taught—that can be accepted on reason.

While Spiritualism is ready and willing to demonstrate all of its claims.

But my dear friends my midnight oil is running low; my lamp is burning dim; the limit is reached.

Here is my testimony to the world. Had I been better endowed or in possession of more wisdom, I might have given it better.

But I have aimed to give this testimony true to my convictions, knowledge and belief.

Whether this book will survive the generation in which it is written I cannot say, but these truths recorded here will endure, however much my memory may be reviled and calumniated, or this book spoken of with invective or aspersion.

But ever bear this in mind, dear reader, I shall little

reck the opprobrium that may be heaped upon me, if perchance in the future, whether on the shores of time or in the Infinite hereafter, I may be greeted with these words, "I was made happier by the reading of your book."

If there are things I have omitted upon which you may wish more light or that which I have not made plain, remember there are many other volumes upon this great subject, written by the master minds of the world and attested to by them. I would be pleased to give the names of some of them, but will forbear.—
Good Night—Good—Night.

IN ANSWER TO A FRIEND

My friend, your letter is received,
In which you mention that of late
You have been seriously grieved
About my spiritual state:
You fear my wings of faith are furled;
That my attention has been given
To matters of this present world,
And not in thoughts and hopes of heaven.

You urge me to remember well
That death can not be far away;
Then judgment; then a burning hell,
Or blissful realms of endless day:
If I would dwell in glory there
While everlasting ages roll,
My first concern, my only care,
Henceforth, should be to save my soul.

My friend, we once dwelt heart to heart;
 We saw things with the self-same eye;
 But we have drifted far apart
 As years have rolled unheeded by:
 Hence I am hopeless to explain,
 In words that shall express my thought,
 The sense of loss, regret and pain,
 With which your message has been fraught.

I found myself, while I was young,
 Where fierce conflicting forces met—
 The long-fought war 'twixt Right and Wrong
 Which neither side has won as yet:
 Oppression's hosts, a surging tide,
 Swept on, resistless as the sea:
 Could I turn carelessly aside,
 And say, "All this is naught to me"?

And I have prayed, e'en from my youth,
 "O Heavenly Father, send me light
 Whereby to see Thy highest Truth;
 Grant me the strength to do the Right:
 So purged of self, so filled with Thee,
 Lifted Thy heart of love so near,
 That I might Thy co-worker be,
 Throughout my transient sojourn here!"

But now you come and call me down,
 And bid me seek another theme—
 A silver harp, a golden crown,
 In worlds of which we hope or dream:

And from the cradle to the grave,
 Your recent precept runs, my whole
 Transcendent duty is to save
 My own poor little soul!

Ye point me to the Holy One
 Who was on Calvary crucified,
 And bid me look to Him alone
 As Teacher, Master, Savior, Guide:
 I trust, my friend, that you have kept
 His lessons in your memory well;
 Had He no mission here except,
 Think ye, to save Himself from hell?

Sad were the days, says holy writ,
 When Jesus dwelt in Nazareth;
 Injustice in the judgment seat
 Condemned the innocent to death:
 Extortion, with relentless hand,
 Destroyed the honest poor for gain;
 And all that fair and sacred land
 Was filled with want, and woe, and pain.

If I have read the tale aright,
 With Jesus it did not suffice
 To meditate on the delight
 Awaiting Him in Paradise:
 He dwelt among, He made his own,
 The sorrows of the multitude;
 The heir of an eternal throne,
 He spent His life in doing good.

642 PROGRESSIVE AGE OF REASON

“The world has gained since that time!” Yes—

But in its fairest realms to-day
Justice, and Truth and Righteousness,
Not yet hold undisputed sway:
Ill-gotten wealth, in chill disdain,
Spurns honest labor to the dust,
And men and women ask in vain
The chance to earn a meager crust.

Babes moan and die for lack of bread;
Men live but half their days; and life,
Which might be glorious instead,
Is one wild, internecine strife,
The luxury-burdened millionaire
Mocks at his victim's dying curse;
The diapason of despair
Resounds throughout the universe.

My friend, I cannot dwell at ease,
And eat my walnuts, drink my wine,
Amid such scenes and sounds as these,
And feel it no affair of mine:
My soul cannot serenely stay
Unmoved by anguish such as this,
And “sweetly sing herself away
To realms of everlasting bliss.”

The alley hovels, mean and low,
Which these, my brothers, occupy,
Need more of my attention now
Than far-off “mansions in the sky”:

And I with God's eternal plan
 May be as fully in accord
 When weeping with my fellow-man
 As when "rejoicing in the Lord."

In truth, I spend but little thought,
 I have not time to rack my brain,
 Whether I may, or I may not,
 Some distant "better world" attain:
 But O I would rejoice to do
 A little something for mankind,
 That I, upon my passage through,
 Might leave a "better world" behind.

If I were face to face with death,
 Methinks for self I scarce would care,
 But yielding up my latest breath,
 Be this to God my earnest prayer:
 "O hasten, hasten, to fulfill
 The glorious promise Thou hast given,
 That all mankind shall do Thy will
 On earth as it is done in heaven!"

And when my soul at last shall rise
 Beyond this darkness into day,
 Perchance, to crown that sweet surprise,
 Some voice of Love divine may say:
 "Come, weary spirit, to thy rest!
 Welcome! for whatsoever ye
 On earth have done unto the least
 Of these, ye did it unto me!"

—J. L. McCREERY.

WASHINGTON, D. C.





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